BEAMES OF DIVINE LIGHT,

Breaking forth from severall places of holy Scripture, as they were learnedly opened,

In XXI. Sermons.

The III. first being the fore-going Sermons to that Treatise called *The Bruised-Reed*, Preached on the precedent words.

By the late Reverend and Iudicious Divine,

RICHARD SIBS,

D.D. Mr. of *Katharine Hall* in *Camb.* and sometimes Preacher at GRAYES INNE.

Published according to the Doctor his owne appointment subscribed with his hand; to prevent imperfect Coppies.

ESAY. 60 3.

The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightnesse of thy rising.

PSALM. 84. 11.

For the Lord God is a Sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory; and no good thing will he withhold from them that walke uprightly.

LONDON.

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MDCXXXIX.

BEAMES

OF DIVINE

LIGHT,

Breaking forth from several places

of holy Scripture, as they were

The Fifth being the fore going Sermons

By the late Reverend and Judicious Divine,

D.D.M. of Amsterdam.

SAINT

LONDON

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE
IOHN, LORD ROBERTS,
Baron of Truro:
AND TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE THE LADY LVCE
his pious Consort, Grace and
Peace from Jesus Christ.

Right Honourable and truly Noble:

IT was not so much the Nobility of your blood, as that of Grace given unto you from the divine hand, which did so much interest you in the love and esteeme of that worthy Servant of Christ, the Author of this worke; in whom Vrim and Thummim met, whose whole course being a reall, and

vitall ſermon, ſweetly conſonant to the tenour of his teaching, made him amiable living, and honourable dead in the opinion of as many as well knew him: This was the thing (I ſuppoſe) which wrought unto him from you (as well as from many others of your Noble Stock and Ranke) more then an ordinary eſteeme: and this is that which maketh me in nothing to doubt, but that his labours made publique under your names, ſhall be very welcome unto you: the worke is anſwering unto the man; and therefore worthy you, and your acceptance: onely this is the diſadvantage; that though theſe Sermons had his owne toung to preach them; yet they want

want his owne pen to commend them unto your Honours: I well know that the expreſsions of holy truthes from a gratious heart by lively voice doe breed deeper impreſsions in thirſting and reverent hearers, then any publiſhing of them in dead letters can doe; yet this we finde in experience, that holy and neceſſary truths, this way comming abroad into the Churches of God, doe get the advantage to continue longer, and to become a more generall good; they may ſtirre up the affections, and ſet on-wards in the courſe of holineſſe where the comforts are ſure, and the honours honouring everlaſting.

In theſe enſuing Sermons you

have variety the mother of delight; and ſuch notable deſcriptions of the perſon, offices, love, and life of Chriſt, that by them you maynot only be ſetled in divine aſſurances to your further comforts, but alſo directed and incouraged (both in your inward and outward converſation) to follow the example of Chriſt, the moſt bleſſed and unerring example unto all Chriſtians. This Champion I beſeech you both to follow unto your lives end; make it your worke to ſet up Chriſt, and his Religion both in your hearts, and in your houſes. Acknowledge none but Chriſt in matter of ſalvation; and none to Chriſt in point of affection: let Chriſt be

be Chriſt with you, and then if Chriſt (and if not Chriſt nothing can) be worth any thing he will make you worthy indeed, he will proove unto you in life and death a Sun, a ſhield, even a full and an anſwerable good: with this Chriſt I leave you, and with you theſe enſuing Sermons, to be read and obſerved for your ſpirituall furtherance in the enjoyment of eternall life by Ieſus Chriſt, deſiring the great God of Heaven and Earth to looke upon both you and yours in much grace and mercie; giving unto you all the comfort and crown of Religion here on earth; and hereafter in Heaven. I reſt,

Your honours to be commanded

JOHN SEDGVVICK.

To the Reader.

Christian Reader:

THE *Word of God is given us as a most pretious treasure, and that not for our selves onely, but for our children after us, and therefore is called* Israels Inheritance, Deut. 33.4. Moses commanded us a Law, even the Inheritance of the Congregation of Iacob. *All the wealth in the world is but as dirt and trash in comparison of the Word to the people of God.* (Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever; for they are the rejoycing of mine heart, *saith* David, Psal. 119. 111.) *And therefore as they rejoyce in their owne enjoying of it, so they doe what they may to assure it to their children when they are dead, that it may be entailed upon them and their posterity after them, Yea so they doe also with the knowledge of divine truths which they have found in the Word, (which is not indeed found out by men all at one time, but by degrees, as Gold is found in Mines, as men come to search farther and farther and to dig deeper and deeper for it) It was not (they know) imparted to them for their owne use onely, but for the*

the benefit of others, the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit withall, 1 Cor. 12. 7. *and therefore as it comes to them from Heaven they hand it to others, that so it may be continued in the Church*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. the ground and pillar of truth, *for the good of those that shall live in future times.*

This was, I hope, the chiefe aime of those that have published these Sermons of that worthy Light of our Church, Dr. Sibs. *And surely we have great cause in this regard thankfully to acknowledge their care and paines, who both tooke them so exactly from his mouth as he delivered them, and then kept them so charily as* τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην a precious thing committed to their trust, 2 Tim. 1. 14 *and have now published them for the common good of all that will make use of them. For by this meanes what was delivered to a few may now build up many to farther degrees of knowledge and grace even all the Land over, and they that never saw his face may be made sharers in those his labours which only a few were so happy as to heare.*

Being my selfe one amongst others that have found the advantage hereof, I was not so hardly wonne as otherwise I should have beene, to commend these Beames of divine Light *to the respect of others. Diverse truths of greatest consequence are exactly handled in the severall Sermons here presented to you, as concerning the misery of our naturall estate and the blisse and happinesse of those that are quickned by Christ, concerning the necessity of the Word, our spirituall Food & the Zealous Violence of the Faithfull in pressing after it, concerning the divers both joyes*

and

and ſorrowes, complaints and Triumphs of Gods children here, when they are blacke though comely, Cant. 1. 5. *and concerning their happineſſe in death, and glory after it, and many other whereof theſe few are onely a taſte,*

The ſtudy of the Scriptures made the Author a man of God, perfect, thorowly furniſhed unto all good workes, *and as became* a faithfull Steward of the manifold grace of God, he endeavoured to teach the whole counſell of God, *and to ſtore men with the knowledge of Gods will,* in all wiſedome and ſpirituall underſtanding. *I deſire that both thou and I and all Gods people may ſo reade theſe his labours that it may farther our growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to whoſe grace I commend thee, being*

Woodſtreet, November 6.
1638.

Thine in him

ARTHVR. JACKSON.

A DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST,

In { His neereneſſe to GOD, / His calling, / His qualification, / His execution of his calling.

In three Sermons,

Being the leading Sermons to that Treatiſe called the Bruiſed Reed, preached upon the precedent words.

By the late Reverend and learned Divine RICHARD SIBS,

Doctor in Divinitie, Maſter of Katherine Hall in Cambridge, and ſometimes Preacher at GRAYES INNE.

ISA. 61. 1.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath annoynted me to preach good tidings unto the meeke.

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A DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST.

Mat. 12. 18.

Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom my soule is well pleased, I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgement to the Gentiles, he shall not strive nor crie, neither shall any man heare his voice in the streets, &c.

THE words are the accomplishment of a prophesie taken out of *Isaiah* 42. as we may see by the former verse, *That it might bee fullfilled.* Now the occasion of bringing them in here in this verse, it is a charge that Christ gives verse. 16. That they should not discover and make him knowne for the miracles he did, he with-

Scope of the words.

drawes himselfe, he was desirous to be concealed, he would not live to the view overmuch: for he knew the rebellious disposition of the Jewes, that were willing to change their governement, and to make him King, therefore he laboured to conceale himselfe all kinde of wayes, now upon this charge that they should tell no body, hee brings in the Prophet *Isaiah* propheſying of him, *Behold my servant*, &c. *hee shall not strive nor crie, neither shall any man heare his voice in the streetes.* Other Kings labour that their pomp and magnificence may be seene, but he shall not mind ostentation, he shall not be contentious nor clamarous, for these 3. things are meant when he saith, *he shall not strive, nor crie, neither shall his voice be heard in the streetes*, he shall not yeeld to any ostentation: for hee came in an abased state to worke our salvation, hee shall not be contentious, nor yet clamarous in matter of wrong, there shall be no boasting any kinde of way, as wee shall see when wee come to the words, you see then the inference here.

The inference in the Prophet *Isaiah* is to comfort the people, and to direct them how to come to worship the true God, after he had declaimed against their Idolatry, as we see in the former chapter, *Behold my servant*, &c. Great Princes have their Embassadours, and the great God of Heaven hath his Son, his servant in whom hee delights, through whom, and by whom, all intercourse betweene God and man is.

It

SERM. I.

It is usuall in the Propheſies, eſpecially of *Iſaiah* that Evangelicall Prophet, when he foretells any thing comfortable to the people, in the promiſe of temporall things he riſeth to ſtabliſh their faith in better things, by adding thereto a propheſie, and promiſe of Chriſt the Meſſias, to inſinuate thus much, I will ſend you the Meſſias that is a greater gift then this that I have promiſed you, therefore you may be ſure of the leſſe, as the Apoſtle reaſons excellently, *Rom.* 8. *If hee ſpared not his owne ſonne but delivered him to death for us all, how ſhall hee not with him give us all things?* So here, I have promiſed you deliverance out of *Babylon*, and this and that, doe you doubt of the performance? alas what is that in compariſon of a greater favour I intend you in Chriſt, that ſhall deliver you out of another manner of *Babylon*, *Behold my ſervant whom I have choſen*, and in *Iſa.* 7. *Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive, and bare a ſonne*, &c. I will ſend you the Meſſias, God ſhall become man, therefore I will not ſtand for any outward favour or deliverance whatſoever. So he goes to the grand promiſe, that they might reaſon from the greater to the leſſe.

Chriſt promiſed in the old teſtament.

I. *To ſtabliſh faith in other promiſes.*

There is another end why in other promiſes, there is mention of the promiſe of the Meſſias, to uphold their faith. Alas wee are unworthy of theſe promiſes, wee are laden with ſin and iniquity. It is no matter, I will ſend you the Meſſias, *Behold my ſervant in whom my ſoule delighteth*, and for his ſake I will delight in you,

2. *To comfort them againſt their owne unworthineſſe.*

SERM. I.

2 Cor. 1. 19.

I am well pleased with you, because I am well pleased in him, therefore be not discouraged, *All the Promises are yea and Amen in Iesus Christ*: For all the promises that be, (though they bee for the things of this life) they are made for Christ, they are yea in him, and they are performed for his sake, they are Amen in him; So much for the occasion of the inference in the Evangelist Saint *Matthew*, and likewise in the Prophet *Isay*.

To come more directly to the words.

Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom my soule is well pleased, &c.

In the words you have a description of Christ, his neareneſſe to God, *Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom my soule is well pleased*.

And then his calling and qualification, *I will put my Spirit upon him*.

And the execution of that calling, *He shall shew judgement to the Gentiles*.

Then the quiet and peaceable manner of the execution of his calling, *He shall not strive nor crie, neither shall any man heare his voice in the streets*, &c.

Behold,

This word is as it were a Beacon lighted up to all the rest, in all the Evangelists you have this

this word often repeated, and the Prophets likewise when they speake of Christ, there is no Propheſie almoſt but there is this word *Behold*,

Why?

The word Behold uſed.

Not to ſpend time in the variety of acceptions, but to ſpeake of it as may ſerve for the preſent purpoſe. The uſe of it in the Prophet, eſpecially out of which theſe words are taken, was to preſent Chriſt to the hearts of the people of God then, therefore he ſaith *Behold*; for Chriſt was preſent to the Beleevers then, he did profit before hee was, hee did good before he was exhibited, becauſe he was *the Lambe of God ſlaine from the beginning of the world*, he was yeſterday as well as to day, and to morrow as well as to day, *yeſterday, to day, and the ſame for ever*: he was preſent to their Faith, and preſent to them in Types and Sacrifices, and preſent in Gods acceptation of him for them; therefore the Prophets mount up with the wing of Propheſie, and in regard of the certainty of the things to come, they ſpeake as if they were preſent, as if they had looked on Chriſt preſent, *Behold my ſervant*, and *Behold a Virgin*, &c.

I.

To ſhew Chriſt as preſent.

But that is not all, another uſe of this word *Behold*, was to call the peoples mindes from their miſeries, and from other abaſing objects that dejected them, and might force deſpaire; why doe you dwell upon your unworthineſſe, and ſin, raiſe up your mindes, *Behold*

2.

To take their mindes off from their miſeries.

SERM. I.

my servant whom I have chosen, &c. This is an object worth beholding and admiration, especially of a distressed soule that may see in Christ whatsoever may comfort it.

3. *To raise their mindes from earthly things.*

A third end of it is to raise the minde from any vulgar, common, base contents, you looke on these things, and are carried away with common triviall objects, as the poore Disciples when they came to the Temple, they stood wondering at the stones, what wondrous stones? what goodly building is here? so shallow minded men, they see any earthly excellencie, they stand gazing; Alas saith Christ, doe you wonder at these things? so the Prophet here raiseth up the mindes of men to looke on an object fit to be looked on, *Behold my servant*, &c. So that the Holy Ghost would have them from this saving object, Christ, to raise satisfaction to their soules every way; are you dejected? here is comfort; are you sinfull? here is righteousnesse; are you led away with present contentments? here you have honours, and pleasures, and all in Christ Jesus, you have a right to common pleasures that others have, and besides them you have interest to others that are everlasting pleasures that shall never faile; so that there is nothing that is dejecting, and abasing in man, but there is comfort for it in Christ Jesus, he is a salve for every sore, a remedie for every maladie, therefore, *Behold my servant*.

This word *Behold*, it is a word of wonder-

ment,

ment, and indeed in Christ there are a world of wonders, every thing is wonderfull in him. Things new are wonderfull, and things rare, and things that are great, that transcend our capacity are wonderfull, that that stops our understanding that it cannot goe through them, vulgar things we see thorow them quickly, but when wee see things that stay our understandings, that raise our understandings higher, and that are more capacious then our understandings, here is matter of admiration and wonder. Now whatsoever may make wonderment is in Jesus Christ, whose name is *Wonderfull*, as it is *Isaiah* 9.7. therefore the Prophet saith, *Behold*.

My servant.

Christ is called a *servant*, first in respect of his creation, because being man, as a creature hee was a servant, but that is not all. *Christ a servant.*

He was a servant in respect of his condition; servant implies a base and low condition, *Philip.* 2. *Christ tooke upon him the forme of a servant*, he emptied himselfe, he was the lowest of all servants in condition: for none was ever so abased as our glorious Saviour. 1. *By Condition.*

And then, it it a name of office as well as of base condition. There are ordinary servants and extraordinary, as great Kings have their servants of state. Christ besides his abasement, he was a servant of state, he was an Ambassador sent 2. *By Office.*

SERM. I.

In respect of God.

sent from the great God, a Prophet, a Priest, and a King, as we shall see afterwards, an extraordinary servant to doe a peece of service that all the Angels in Heaven, and all the men on the Earth joyned together could not performe, this great master-piece of service was to bring God and man together againe that were at variance, as it is, 1. *Pet.* 3. 18. *to bring us to God*, we were severed and scattered from God, his office was to gather us together againe, to bring us all to one head againe, to bring us to himselfe and so to God, to *reconcile us*, as the Scripture phrase is. Now it being the greatest worke and service that ever was, it required the greatest servant, for no creature in the world could performe it, all the Angells of Heaven would have sunke under this service to have undergone satisfaction to divine justice: for the Angels themselves when they sinned, they could not recover themselves but sunke under their owne sinne eternally; thus wee see how he is Gods servant, who set him a part and chose him to this service.

1 Pet. 3. 18.

In respect of us.

And then, he was a servant to us, for *the Sonne of man came to minister, not to be ministred unto*, he washed his Disciples feet, hee was a servant to us, because he did our worke and suffered our punishment, *we made him serve by our sinnes*, as the Prophet saith; he is a servant that beares an other mans burthen, there was a double burthen, of obedience active, and obedience passive, he bore them both, hee came under

under the law for us, both doing what wee should have done, and indeed farre more acceptably, and suffering that wee should have suffered and far more acceptably, hee being our surety, being a more excellent person, he did beare our burthen, and did our worke, therfore he was Gods servant, and our servant, and Gods servant, because he was our servant, because he came to do a work behoovefull to us.

Heerein appeares the admirable love and care of God to us wretched creatures, heere is matter of wonderment.

If we looke to him that was a servant.

If we looke to that in God, and him, that made him stoope to be a servant.

If we looke to the manner of the performance of this service.

If we look to to the fruit of that service, they are all matter of wonderment.

Gods love to us.

I.

In the person thus abased. Phil. 2.

If we look to the person that was this servant, the Apostle in *Philip.* 2. will tell you *he thought it not robbery to be equall with God, yet he tooke upon him the shape of a servant*, was not this wonderfull for God to become man, the glorious God to abase himselfe to bee a servant? God-Man glorious God, and base servant: for the living God to dye, for the incomprehensible God to be inclosed in the wombe of a Virgin, for glory it selfe to be abased, for riches to become poore, what matter of wonderment is here? the very Angels stand at a gaze and wonder, *they pry into these things*, his name may well be *Wonderfull*. There

SERM. I.

4. Conjunctions wonderfull.

There are foure notable conjunctions that are eſpecially wonderfull, two in us and two above us.

One in us, is the conjunction of ſo excellent a thing as the ſoule breathed in by God, the ſoule of man is an admirable thing, the world is not worth it in the judgement of him that gave himſelfe for it, that this ſhould be joyned to a peece of earth, indeed *I am wonderfully made* ſaith *David*, in regard of his body, but the conjunction of the ſoule and body together, ſo excellent a ſubſtance, to ſo baſe a thing as earth, to a peece of red well coloured earth, to a lump of fleſh, it is a wondrous conjunction.

But there is a more ſupernaturall conjunction of man, when all of us, ſinners as we are, are knit to Chriſt our head, and head and members make one Chriſt, here is a wondrous conjunction, Saint *Paul* calls it a myſtery, *Epheſ.* 5. theſe conjunctions in us are wonderfull.

But now (to goe higher) in Chriſt there are more wonderfull conjunctions, for the greateſt and the meaneſt to joyne together, for God and man to come together, the Lord of all, and a ſervant, and ſuch a ſervant as ſhould be under a curſe, for the higheſt of all to come to the deepeſt abaſement, for there was no abaſement ever ſo deepe as Chriſts was, in a double regard.

Chriſts abaſement the greateſt.

Firſt, none ever went ſo low as he, for hee ſuffered the wrath of God, and bore upon him the ſins of us all, none ever was ſo low.

And

And then in another respect his abasement was greatest, because hee descended from the highest top of glory, and for him to be man, to be a servant, to be a curse, to suffer the wrath of God, to be the lowest of all; Lord whether dost thou descend? here is a wonder in these conjunctions.

Next to Christs abasement was *Adams*, because he was the most excellent, being in the state of innocencie, and carrying the image of God, and being familiar with God, for him presently to come into that fearefull condition, it was the greatest abasement, because it was from the greatest dignity, that made the abasement of Christ so great, for Lordship to submit to service, for God to be man, the blessed God to become a curse, heere is matter of wonder indeed.

In Christ againe there was a conjunction of perfect body, perfect soule, and perfect God, and all make one Christ; In the Trinity there is a conjunction of three persons in one nature, that is a wondrous conjunction, but it belongs not to our present purpose, here you see there is matter of wonder in the person, that Christ should be a servant.

2. *Whence Christ was so abased.*

There is matter of wonder likewise in that from whence he is a servant; whence comes it that Christ is a servant? It is from the wondrous love of God, and the wondrous love of Christ, to be so abased, it was wondrous love in God to give him to us to be so abased, and the

the wondrous misery we were in, that we could not otherwise be freed from; for such was the pride of man, that he being man would exalt himselfe to bee like God, God became man, he became a servant to expiate our pride in *Adam*, so that it is wondrous in the spring of it. There was no such love as Christs to become a servant, there was no such misery as we were in out of which we were delivered by this abasement of Christ, becomming a servant, so it is wondrous in that regard, springing from the infinite love and mercy of God, which is greater in the worke of Redemption, and Reconciliation, then in the Creation of the world, for the distance betweene nothing and something was lesse then the distance betweene sin and happinesse. For nothing adds no opposition, but to be in a sinfull state there is opposition, therefore it was greater love and mercy for God when wee were sinfull, (and so obnoxious to eternall destruction) to make us of sinners not onely men, but to make us happie, to make us heires of heaven out of a sinfull and cursed estate, then to make us of nothing something, to make us men in *Adam*, for there God prevailed over nothing, but here his mercy triumphed over that which is opposite to God, over sinfullnesse and cursednesse. To shew that the creature cannot be so low, but there is somewhat in God above the misery of the creature, his mercy shall triumph over the baseſt estate where hee will

Gods love in Redemption greater then in Creation.

will shew mercy, therefore there is mercy above all mercy, and love above all love, in that Christ was a servant.

Thirdly, it is wondrous in regard of the fruit we have by this service of Christ, the worke of our Redemption, to be translated from the *kingdome of Satan to the glorious liberty of the sonnes of God*, to be brought out of darkenesse into marveilous light, it is a marveilous matter of wonder, the good wee have by this abasement of Christ, *Behold what love the Father hath shewed us that wee should be called the sonnes of God?* Now all this comes from Christs being a servant, our liberty comes from his service and slavery, our life from his death, our adoption and sonship and all comes from his abasement, therefore it is a matter of wonderment for the great things we have by it, *O the depth, O the depth* saith Saint *Paul*, here are all dimensions in this excellent worke that Christ hath wrought by his abasement, by his incarnation, and taking upon him the forme of a servant, and dying for us, here is the height, and breadth, and length, and depth of the love of God in Christ, O the riches of Gods mercie, the Apostles they stand in a wonder and admiration of this, and indeed if any thing be to be admired, it is Christ, that wondrous conjunction, the wondrous love that wrought it, and the wondrous fruit we have by it.

3.
The fruit of christs abasement.

Matter of wonderment in the worke of Redemption.

It is the baseneſſe of our nature we can wonder at shallow things, there cannot be a foolery but

SERM. I.

but there will be many about it presently, and stand admiring every emptie idle thing, that the nature of man is carried away with, whereas indeed there is nothing worthy of admiration but the wonderfull love of God, *O how wonderfull are thy workes?* saith *David* of the works of Creation, *Psal.* 8. the worke of Creation and of providence whereby God guides the world are wonderfull, and the Psalmist cries out of the folly of men, that do not regard the worke of the Lord, *Psal.* 107. *Fooles regard not this, The workes of the Lord are worthy to bee considered, they are knowne of all that delight in them*, *Psal.* 111. but if these things bee so wonderfull, and to bee regarded and delighted in, alas what is all the worke of redemption? *Great is the mysterie of godlinesse, God manifested in the flesh*, &c. there are mysteries, matters of admiration, but carnall men thinke these triviall matters, they can heare matters of more rarity, and when they speake of these things, alas they are too wise to wonder, tush, they know the Gospell well enough, whereas indeed, as wee see here, they are things that deserve the admiration of Angels, and as they deserve it, so the Angels prie into these excellent secrets in Jesus Christ.

Christ a servant by way of excellencie.

Christ was a servant by office and by condition, we must not rest in this base condition: for he took upon him the forme of a servant that he might be an excellent servant, there is both baseneſse and excellencie in the word servant:

ſervant: for his humiliation was a degree of his exaltation, and a part of his advancement; if wee regard his humane nature, it was an advancement for mans nature to bee grafted into God by conception, and incarnation, but if wee regard his God-head, for him to conceale himſelfe, and lay aſide the beames and rayes of Majeſty, and cloath himſelfe with mans fleſh, this was the firſt degree of humiliation, it was an advancement to his fleſh, but it was a concealing and hiding to his God-head, for God to become a ſervant this was an abaſement: but then conſider the excellencie of the ſervice how God delighted in it, and how uſefull it was to us, and wee ſhall ſee that he was a ſervant by way of excellencie. There was firſt in Chriſt humane fleſh, abaſed fleſh, and then glorious fleſh, abaſement was firſt neceſſary for Chriſt: for hee could not have performed the office of a ſervant, unleſſe hee had undertaken the condition of a ſervant, he muſt firſt bee abaſed and then glorious, our ill muſt be his, before his good could be ours, and how could hee undergoe our ill, our ſin and miſery, and the curſe due to us, but he muſt bee abaſed? our ſins muſt be imputed to him, and then his righteouſneſſe, and whatſoever is good is ours, ſo here is both the abaſement of his condition, and the excellencie of his office to be a King, Prieſt, and Prophet to his Church, as wee ſhall ſee afterward.

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Vſe. Seeing Chriſt was a ſervant wee ſhould bee humble.

Is the Lord Chriſt a ſervant, this ſhould teach us not to ſtand upon any tearmes, if Chriſt had ſtood upon tearmes, if he had refuſed to take upon him the ſhape of a ſervant, alas where had we and our ſalvation beene? And yet wretched creatures we thinke our ſelves too good to doe God and our Brethren any ſervice. Chriſt ſtood not upon his greatneſſe, but being equall with God he became a ſervant. Oh we ſhould diſmount from the tower of our conceited excellency. The heart of man is a proud creature, a proud peice of fleſh, men ſtand upon their diſtance, what; ſhall I ſtoupe to him? I am thus and thus, we ſhould deſcend from the heaven of our conceit, and take upon us the forme of ſervants, and abaſe our ſelves to doe good to others, even to any, and account it an honour to doe any good to others in the places wee are in. Chriſt did not thinke himſelfe too good to leave Heaven, to conceale and vaile his Majeſty under the vaile of our fleſh to worke our redemption, to bring us out of the curſed eſtate we were in; ſhall we thinke our ſelves too good for any ſervice? Who for ſhame can be proud when he thinks of this that God was abaſed, ſhall God bee abaſed, and man proud? ſhall God become a ſervant, and ſhall wee that are ſervants thinke much to ſerve our fellow-ſervants? Let us learne this leſſon to abaſe our ſelves, we cannot have a better patterne to looke unto then our bleſſed Saviour. A Chriſtian is the greateſt freeman in the world, hee

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is free from the wrath of God, free from hell and damnation, from the curse of the Law, but then though he bee free in these respects, yet in regard of love he is the greatest servant, love abaseth him to doe all the good hee can, and the more the Spirit of Christ is in us, the more it will abase us to any thing wherin we can be serviceable.

Vse. 2. Comfort that Christ became a servant.

Then againe here is comfort for us, that Christ in whatsoever he did in our redemption is Gods servant, he is appointed by God to the worke, so both God and Christ meete together in the worke; Christ is a voluntary in it, for he emptied himselfe, *he tooke upon him the forme of a servant*, he came from Heaven voluntary. And then withall the Father joynes with him, the Father appointed him and sent him, the Father layed him as the corner stone, *the Father sealed him*, as it is, *Iohn. 6. The Father set him out*, as it is, *Romans 3.* hee hath set him out as the propitiatory. Therefore when wee thinke of reconciliation and redemption, and salvation wrought by Christ, let us comfort our selves in the soliditie of the worke, that it is a service perfectly done, it was done by Christ, God Man, it is a service accepted of God, therefore God cannot refuse the service of our salvation wrought by Christ, Christ was his servant in the working of it, we may present it to God, it is the obedience of thy servant, it is the satisfaction of thy servant, here is that will give full content and satisfacti-

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on to conscience in this that whatsoever Christ did, he was Gods servant in it, but wee shall better understand the intent of the Holy Ghost, when we have gone over the rest of the words, *Behold my servant,*

Whom I have chosen.

Christ chosen of God.

Christ was chosen before all worlds, to bee the head of the elect, hee was predestinate and ordained by God. As wee are ordained to salvation, so Christ is ordained to be the head of all that shall be saved, hee was chosen eternally, and chosen in time, he was singled out to the work by God, and all others that are chosen are chosen in him, there had beene no chooſing of men but in him: for God saw us so defiled lying in our filth that hee could not looke upon us but in his Sonne, he chose him, and us in him.

Christ chosen to his office.

Here is meant not onely chooſing by eternall election to happinesse, but a chooſing to office, there is a chooſing to grace and glory, and a chooſing to office. Here it is as well meant a chooſing to office as to grace and glory. God as he chose Christ to grace and glory, so he chose him to the office of Mediatorship. Christ did not chooſe himselfe, he was no usurper, *No man cals himself to the office*, as it is in *Hebrews*, but Christ was called and appointed of God, he was willing indeed to the worke, hee tooke it voluntary upon him, but as Mediator God

God choſe him, God the Father and he joyning together.

Chriſt as man choſen to ſalvation.

If we reſpect eternall ſalvation or grace or office, Chriſt was choſen in reſpect of his Man-hood: For as it is well obſerved by Divines, Chriſt is the Head of al that are predeſtinate, and the humane Nature of Chriſt could not merit its choiſe, it could not merit its incarnation, it could not merit union with the God-head, it was meerely from grace. How could Chriſts Man-hood deſerve any thing of God before it was? Things muſt have a ſubſiſtence before they can worke: Our bleſſed Saviour is the patterne of all election, and his Man-hood could not merit to bee knit to the ſecond perſon, as how could it being a creature? Therefore the knitting of the humane nature of Chriſt to his divine, it is called *the grace of Vnion*, the chooſing of the humane Nature of Chriſt to be ſo gratious and glorious, it was of grace.

Chriſt he was both *a choſen ſervant* and *a choiſe ſervant*, in calling him a choſen ſervant, it implies his excellency, as *a choſen veſſell, a choſen arrow in Gods quiver*, ſo a choſen ſervant, every way excellent.

This adds to our comfort, that whatſoever Chriſt did for us, he did it as choſen, hee is a choſen ſtone, as Saint *Peter* ſaith; 1. *Peter* 2. 6. *A precious corner ſtone, though refuſed of the builders, yet precious in Gods ſight.*

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To rest in Gods choice.

Was Christ a chosen servant of God and shall not we take Gods choise? Is not Gods choise the best, and the wisest? Hath God chosen Christ to worke our salvation, and shall we choose any other? Shall we run to Saints mediation, to the Virgin *Mary* and others for intercession, which is a part of Christs office? Who chose *Mary*, *and Peter and Paul* to this worke, there is no mention in Scripture of them for this purpose, *But behold my servant whom I have chosen.*

God in Paradice did choose a wife for *Adam*, so God hath chosen a husband for his Church, he hath chosen Christ for us, therefore it is intollerable sacrilegious rebellion, and impudency to refuse a Saviour, and Mediator of Gods chooſing, and to set up others of our own, as if we were wiser to chooſe for our selves then God is, we may content our selves well enough with Gods choise, because he is the party offended.

Besides, it is folly to goe out from Christ where there is all fulnesse and content, to leave Gods chosen servant, and to goe to any other servant, to any broken vessell, God rests in this servant, as *Pharoah* did in *Ioseph*, the second person in the Kingdome, therefore let Gods choise and ours agree.

To offer Christ to God in our services.

And this directs us also in our devotions to God, how to carry our selves in our prayers and services, to offer Christ to God, *Behold Lord thy chosen servant, that thou hast chosen to*

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bee my Mediator, my Saviour, my all in all to me, he is a Mediator and a Saviour of thine owne chooſing, thou canſt not refuſe thy owne choiſe, if thou looke upon me, there is nothing but matter of unworthineſſe, but look upon him whom thou haſt choſe, my head and Saviour.

Take heed of neglecting Christ.

Againe, if Chriſt be a choſen ſervant, O let us take heed how we neglect Chriſt. When God hath choſen him for us ſhall not we think him worthy to be imbraced, and regarded, ſhall we not kiſſe the Sonne with the kiſſe of love, and faith, and ſubjection? he is a Saviour of Gods owne chooſing, refuſe him not. What is the reaſon that men refuſe this choſen ſtone? They will not be laid low enough to build upon this corner ſtone, this hidden ſtone; the excellencie of Chriſt is hidden, it appeares not to men, men will not be ſquared to be built upon him, ſtones for a building muſt be framed, and made even, and flat, men ſtick out with this and that luſt, they will not be pared and cut and fitted for Chriſt; if they may have their luſts and wicked lives, they will admit of Chriſt, but wee muſt make choiſe of him, as a ſtone to build upon him, and to bee built on him, wee muſt be made like him, we like not this laying low, and abaſing, therefore we refuſe this *Corner ſtone*, though God hath made him the corner of building to all thoſe that have the life of grace here, or ſhall have glory hereafter.

The Papiſts admit him to be a ſtone, but not

the onely ſtone to build on, but they build upon him and Saints, upon him and works, upon him and traditions, but he is the onely corner ſtone, God hath choſen him onely, and wee muſt chooſe him onely, that wee may bee framed and laid upon him to make up one building, ſo much for that. *Behold my ſervant whom I have choſen.*

My Beloved in whom my ſoule is well-pleaſed.

How doe we know that theſe words in the Prophet *Iſaiah* are fitly appliable to Chriſt? By the greateſt authority that ever was from the beginning of the world, by the immediate voice of God the Father from Heaven, who applies theſe words in *Iſaiah* to Chriſt, *Mat.* 3. in his inauguration when he was baptiſed, *This is my Beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleaſed*, this is that my Sonne, that beloved, ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, the beloved Sonne, ſo beloved that my ſoule delights in him, he is capable of my whole love, I may powre out my whole love upon him, *in whom I am well pleaſed*, it is the ſame with that heere, *in whom my ſoule delighteth*, the one expreſſeth the other.

Chriſt beloved of God.

How, and in what reſpect is Chriſt thus beloved of God?

1. *As God.*

Firſt as he is God, the Sonne of God, the engraven Image of his Father, ſo he is *primum amabile*, the firſt lovely thing that ever was, when

when the Father loves him, he loves himselfe in him, so he loves him as God, as the second person, as his owne image and character.

And as man he loves him, for as man he was the most excellent creature in the world, he was conceived, fashioned, and framed in his mothers wombe by the Holy Ghost. It is said, *Heb.* 10.5. God gave him a body, God the Father by the Holy Ghost fashioned and framed, and fitted him with a body, therefore God must needs love his owne workmanship. 2. *As Man.*

Againe, there was nothing in him displeasing to God, there was no sinne found in his life any way, therefore as man he was well-pleasing to God, he took the man-hood, and ingrafted it into the second person, and inriched it there, therefore he must needs love the Man-hood of Christ being taken into so neare a union with the God-head.

As God and man Mediator especially hee loves and delights in him, in regard of his office, he must needs delight in his owne Ordinance and Decree, now he decreed and sealed him to that office, therefore he loves and delights in him as a Mediator of his owne appointing, and ordaining to be our King, and Priest, and Prophet. 3. *As Mediator.*

Againe, hee loved and delighted in him, in regard of the execution of his office both in doing and suffering. In doing, the Evangelist saith, *hee did all things well*, when hee healed the sick, and raised the dead, and cured all diseases 4. *In regard of the execution of his office.*

ſeaſes, whatſoever he did was well done. And for his ſuffering God delighted in him for that, as it is in *Iohn* 10.17. *My Father loves me, becauſe I lay downe my life*, and ſo in *Iſaiah* 53. *He ſhall divide him a portion with the great, becauſe hee powred out his ſoule unto death*, and in *Philip.* 2. *Becauſe he abaſed himſelfe to the death of the Croſſe, God gave him a name above all names*, therefore God loves and delights in him for his ſuffering and abaſement.

It is ſaid of *Noah*, *Gen.* 8.21. that he offered a ſacrifice after the flood, and *the Lord ſmelled a ſweet ſavour of his ſacrifice*, and thereupon hee ſaith, *I will not curſe the earth againe*, ſo God loves and delights in Chriſt as he offered himſelfe a ſacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour wherin God reſts, he felt ſuch a ſweet ſavour in the ſacrifice of Chriſt, he is ſo delighted in it, that he will never deſtroy mankind, hee will never deſtroy any that beleeve in Chriſt, the ſacrifice of *Noah* was a Type of Chriſts ſacrifice.

Now that Chriſts ſacrifice was ſo acceptable to God, there is a direct place for it in *Epheſ.* 5. *Walke in love as Chriſt hath loved us and hath given himſelfe an offering and a ſacrifice to God of a ſweet ſmell.* And indeed how many ſweet ſavours were there in the ſacrifice of Chriſt offered on the Croſſe? was there not the ſweet ſavour of obedience? he was *obedient to the death of the Croſſe*, there was the ſweet ſavour of patience, and of love to mankind, therefore God delighted in him, as God, as Man, as Mediator God-man,

God-Man, in his doings, in his sufferings, every way.

Doth God delight thus in Christ, in his person or considered mystically? I answer both, God loves and delights in Christ mysticall, that is, in Christ and his members, in whole Christ, *This is my Beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleased*, not onely with whom alone by himselfe, but *in whom*, in him as God, in him in body and soule, in him as head of the Church, in him mystically, in all that are under him any kind of way, God delights in him, and all his.

Quest. *Answ.* *God loves Christ mysticall.*

Is it possible that hee should delight in the head, and refuse the members? That he should love the husband, and mislike the Spouse? O no; with the same love that God loves Christ, he loves all his, he delights in Christ and all his with the same delight, there is some difference in the degree, *That Christ in all things may have the preheminence*, but it is the same love; therefore our Saviour sets it downe excellently in his owne prayer, he desires *that the same love wherewith his Father loved him may be in them that are his*, that they may feele the love wherewith his Father loves him: for hee loves him and his members, him and his Spouse with all one love.

This is our comfort and our confidence that God accepts us, because hee accepts his Beloved, and when he shall cease to love Christ, he shall cease to love the members of Christ, they and

Comfort, Gods love to us grounded on Christ.

and Chriſt make one myſticall Chriſt. This is our comfort in dejection for ſinne, wee are ſo and ſo indeed, but Chriſt is the choſen ſervant of God, *In whom he delighteth*, and delights in us in him, it is no matter what we are in our ſelves, but what we are in Chriſt, when we are once in him and continue in him, God loves us with that inſeperable love wherewith hee loves his owne Sonne, therefore Saint *Paul* triumphs, *Rom.* 8. *What ſhall ſeperate us from the love of God in Chriſt Ieſus?* This love it is founded in Chriſt, *therefore neither things preſent, nor things to come*, (as he goes on there gloriouſly) *ſhall bee able to ſeperate us*, you ſee what a wondrous confidence and comfort wee have hence, if we labour to be in Chriſt, that then God loves and delights in us, becauſe he loves, and delights in Chriſt Jeſus.

God loves the worke of our redemption.

And here is a wondrous comfort that God muſt needs love our ſalvation and redemption, when he loves Chriſt, becauſe *hee powred out his ſoule to death to ſave us*, doth not God delight that wee ſhould bee ſaved, and our ſinnes ſhould bee forgiven, when hee loves Chriſt becauſe hee abaſed himſelfe for that purpoſe? What a prop and foundation of comfort is this, when the Divell ſhall preſent God to us in a terrible hideous manner, as an avenging God, *and conſuming fire*, &c. (indeed out of Chriſt he is ſo) let us preſent to our ſelves thoughts of God, as the Scripture ſets foorth God to us, and as God

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sets forth himself not only in that sweet relation as a Father to Christ, but our father, *I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*, having both one God, and love and care. There is none of us all but the Divell will have a saying to us, either in the time of our life, in some terrible temptation, especially when any outward abasement comes, or at the houre of death, and all the cordials wee have gathered out of the Word will then be little enough to support the drooping soule, especially in the houre of temptation. Oh Beloved what a wondrous stay, and satisfaction to a distressed conscience doth this yeeld, that Christ in all that hee hath wrought for us, is Gods chosen servant, *whom he loves and delights in*, and delights in him for this very worke that hee abased himselfe and gave himselfe for us, that hee wrought Gods worke, because he wrought reconciliation for us? If we can believe in Christ, wee see heere what ground of comfort wee have, that God loves and delights in us, as he doth in his owne Son.

Comfort in our daily approach to God.

And what a comfort is it now in our daily approach to God to minister boldnesse to us in all our suites, that we goe to God in the name of one that he loves, *in whom his soule delights*, that we have a friend in Court, a friend in Heaven for us, that is at the right hand of God, and interposeth himselfe there for us, in all our suites that makes us acceptable, that perfumes our prayers and makes them acceptable

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table, his intercession is still by vertue of his service, dying for us, he intercœeds by vertue of his redemption, if God love him for the worke of redemption, he loves him for his intercession, therefore God must needs regard the prayers made by him, by vertue of his dying for us, when he loves him for dying for us. Bee sure therfore in al our suites to God to take along our elder Brother, take our beloved Brother, take *Benjamin* with us, offer al to God in him, our persons to be accepted in him, our prayers, our hearing, our w orks, and al that we do, and we shal be sure to speed: For he is one in whom the soule of God delights. There must be this passage and repassage, as God looks upon us lovely in' him and delights in us, as wee are members of him, all Gods love, and the fruits of it come to us as we are in Christ, and are one with him, then in our passage to God againe, we must returne all, and doe all to God in Christ, be sure not to goe to a naked God: for so he is *a consuming fire*, but goe to him in the mediation of him whom he loves, *and in whom his soule delighteth.*

To stirre us up to delight in Christ.

And shall God love him, and delight in him, and shall not our soule delight in Christ? This therefore should stirre up our affections to Christ, to be faithfull in our conjugall affection as the Spouse of Christ, to say, *My Beloved is mine and I am my Beloveds,* Christ calls his Church, *My Love and my Dove.* Doth Christ delight in us, and God delight in Christ, and shall

shall not we delight in Christ, that delights in us, and in whom God delights? In the 1. *Cor.* 16. *ult.* the Apostle is bold to pronounce a bitter curse, *Anathema Maranatha* upon him that loves not the Lord Christ Jesus, a most bitter curse, when Christ shall become a servant to do our worke for us, to suffer for us, to beare the burthen of our sinnes upon the tree, to become our husband, to bestow his riches upon us, to raise us to the same condition with himselfe, and withall to be such a one as God hath chosen out to love, and delight in as the best object of his love, and most capable of it, and for us not to solace and delight our selves in him that God delights in, when God delights in him for our sake, God loves and delights in him for the worke of salvation and redemption by his blood, and shall not wee love and imbrace him for his love which is for our good? What good hath God by it but onely the glory of his mercy, in saving our soules through Christ? Therefore if God love him for the good he doth to us, much more should we love him for the fruit of it that wee receive our selves.

It should shame us therefore when we finde dullnesse, and coldnesse upon us, that wee can heare of any thing better then of Christ, and arguments concerning Christ are cold to us, alas, where is our love, and joy, and delight? and when we can make no better but a carnall use of the incarnation and other benefits by Christ,

Christ, we should therefore desire God to shed the love of Christ into our hearts more and more, that we may feele in our soules the love that hee beares to us, and may love God and Christ againe, for that that hee hath done for us.

On what grou to valew Christians,

Hence we have also a ground of estimation of Christians to be excellent persons, doth God valew poore sinfull soules so much as to give Christ for them to become a Saviour, doth he delight in Christ for giving himselfe for them, and shall not we love one another, whom God and Christ so loves?

We may know we are in Christ

But if God love and delight in those that are in Christ with the same love and delight that he hath in him, how shall I know that I am in Christ, and that God thus delights in me?

I.
If we have his Spirit.

Briefly, a man may know that hee is in Christ, if he find the Spirit of Christ in him, for the same Spirit (when Christ tooke our nature) that sanctified that blessed masse wherof he was made, when there was an union betweene him and the second person, the same Spirit sanctifies our soules and bodies, there is one Spirit in the head and in the members, therfore if we find the Spirit of Christ in us, we are in Christ and he in us. Now this Spirit is renewing, *Whosoever is in Christ is a new creature*, all is new, *old things are done away*, the old manner of language, the old disposition, old affections, old company, all old things are past,

How to know we have the Spirit

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all is new, and if a man be a new creature, hee hath right and title to *the new heaven and new earth*, let us examine the worke of grace in us, if there be no change in us we have no present interest in Christ, we have to do with him because he is stilll woing us to be in him, but as yet we have no title to him.

The very beholding of Christ is a transforming sight, the Spirit that makes us new creatures, and stirres us up to behold this servant, it is a transforming beholding, if wee looke upon him with the eye of faith, it will make us like Christ; for the Gospell is a mirrour, and such a mirrour, that when we looke into it, and see our selves interessed in it, *wee are changed from glory to glory*; a man cannot looke upon the love of God and of Christ in the Gospell, but it will change him to be like God, and Christ: for how can we see Christ, and God in Christ, but we shall see how God hates sin, and this will transforme us to hate it as God doth, who hated it so that it could not bee expiated but with the blood of Christ God-man, so seeing the holinesse of God in it, it will transforme us to be holy, when we see the love of of God in the Gospell, and the love of Christ giving himselfe for us, this will transforme us to love God, when wee see the humility and obedience of Christ, when we looke on Christ as Gods chosen servant in all this, and as our surety and head, it transformes us to the like humility and obedience, those that find not their

dispositions in some comfortable measure wrought to this blessed transformation, they have not yet those eyes that the Holy Ghost requireth here, *Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom my soule delighteth.*

I will put my Spirit upon him.

Now wee come to the qualification of Christ for his calling, in these words, *I will put my Spirit upon him*, that is, I will cloath him with my Spirit, I will put it (as it were) upon him as a garment.

Degrees of Christs receiving the Spirit.

Now there were divers degrees of Christs receiving the Spirit at severall times: for hee was conceived by the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost did sanctifie that blessed masse whereof his body was framed in the wombe of the Virgin, he was quickned in the wombe in his conception by the Holy Ghost, and he was graced by the Holy Ghost, and led by the Spirit in all things before his Baptisme, but afterward when he came to set upon his office, to be the Prophet, and Priest, and King of his Church, that great office of saving mankind, which he did not solemly set upon till hee was thirty yeares old, then God powred upon him a special portion of the Spirit answerable to that great calling, then the *Spirit lighted upon him*, Christ was ordained to his office by the greatest authority that ever any was ordained from the beginning of the world: for at his Baptisme when he was ordained

dained and ſet apart to his office, there was the Father from heaven uttered an audible voice, *This is my beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleaſed*, and there was Chriſt the partie baptized and inſtalled into that great office, then there was the Holy Ghoſt in the forme and ſhape of a Dove, it being a matter of the greateſt conſequence that ever was in the world, greater then the Creation, it was fit it ſhould be done with the greateſt authority, and ſo it was, the Father, Sonne and Holy Ghoſt being preſent at the admiſſion of Chriſt into his office, this is eſpecially here intended, though the other bee included, *I will put my Spirit vpon him*, that is, I will annoint him, as it is in *Iſaiah* 61.1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon mee* (ſaith Chriſt) *becauſe the Lord hath annointed me to preach good tidings to the meeke, to binde up the broken hearted, to proclaime liberty to the captives, to open the priſon for them that are bound, to proclaime the acceptable yeare of the Lord*, that is, the yeare of *Iubile*, for that was a Type of Chriſt, to preach the Goſpell, deliverance to all that are in captivity, ſervitude, and thraldome under Satan and ſin, this was accompliſhed when Chriſt at his Baptiſme entred upon his office, God put his Spirit upon him, to ſet him apart, to ordaine him, and to qualifie him with abundance of grace for the worke, for there are theſe three things eſpecially meant by putting the Spirit upon him, ſeparation, or ſetting apart, and ordaining and inriching with the gifts of the Spirit.

What is meant by putting the Spirit on Chriſt

When any one is called to great place, there is a ſetting apart from others, and an ordaining to that particular, and a qualifying, if it be a calling of God, he qualifies where he ordaines alwaies.

But Chriſt had the Spirit before, what doth he meane then when hee ſaith hee will put the Spirit upon him now?

I anſwer he had the Spirit before anſwerable to that condition he was in, now hee received the Spirit anſwerable to that condition hee was to undertake, he was perfect then for that condition, now he was to be made perfect for that office he was to ſet upon, he was alway perfect, hee had abundance of Spirit for that eſtate hee was in, but now he was to enter upon another condition, to preach the Goſpell, to be a Prophet, and after to be a Prieſt, therefore he ſaith now eſpecially, *I will put my Spirit upon him.*

Three ſorts of perſons annointed.

Now this putting of the Spirit it is expreſſed in *Iſaiah* 61. and other places by *Annointing*. There were three ſorts of perſons that were annointed before Chriſt, Prophets, Prieſts, and Kings, now Chriſt was to bee a Prophet, a Prieſt, and a King, therefore hee was to be annointed with the Spirit to enable him to theſe three offices.

I might here take occaſion to enlarge my ſelfe in the offices of Chriſt, but I will onely ſpeake of them as the Text miniſtreth juſt occaſion.

Three maine defects in man.

There are three maine defects in man ſince the fall.

There

There is ignorance and blindneſſe.

There is rebellion in the will and affections.

And in regard of his condition, by reaſon of the ſinnes of nature and life, a ſubjection to a curſed eſtate, to the wrath of God and eternall damnation.

Now anſwerable to theſe three grand ills, whoſoever ſhall bee ordained a Saviour muſt provide proportionable remedies for theſe; hereupon comes a threefold office in Chriſt that is ordained to ſave man, to cure this threefold miſchiefe and maladie.

Supplied in Chriſt.

As we are ignorant and blind, he is a Prophet to inſtruct us, to convince us of the ill ſtate we are in, and then to convince us of the good hee intends us and hath wrought for us, to inſtruct us in all things concerning our everlaſting comfort, he is ſuch a Prophet, as teacheth not onely the outward, but the inward man, hee openeth the heart, he teacheth to doe the things he teacheth; men teach what we ſhould doe, but they teach not the doing of them, he is ſuch a Prophet as teacheth us the very things, hee teacheth us to love and to obey, *&c.*

And anſwerable to the rebellion, and ſinfulneſſe of our diſpoſitions, he is a King to ſubdue whatſoever is ill in us, and likewiſe to ſubdue all oppoſite power without us, by little and little hee will trample all enemies under his feete, and under our feete too ere long.

Now as we are curſed by reaſon of our ſin-

full condition, ſo hee is a Prieſt to ſatisfie the wrath of God for us, *he was made a curſe for us*, he became a ſervant, that being ſo hee might die, *and undergoe the curſed death of the croſſe*, not onely death, *but a curſed death*, and ſo his blood might be an attonement as a Prieſt; So anſwerable to the three fold ill in us, you ſee here is a three fold office in Chriſt.

In what order Chriſt performes his offices.

Now Chriſt performes theſe three offices in this order.

Firſt of all he is a Prophet, when he was baptiſed the Spirit was put upon him, as in *Iſaiah 61. To preach deliverance to the captives.* Firſt he preached wherefore he came into the world, why God ſent him, and diſcovered to the world the ſtate they were in, and when he had preached as a Prophet, then as a Preiſthe dyed, and offered himſelfe a Sacrifice.

After death his Kingly office was moſt apparent. For then he roſe againe as a triumphant King over death and all our enemies, and aſcended in his triumphant chariot to Heaven, and there he ſits glorioufly as a King in his throne at the right hand of God, ſo that how ever at his Baptiſme, and before when he was ſanctified in his mothers wombe, he was both King, Prieſt, and Prophet, yet in regard of the order of manifeſtation, he manifeſted himſelfe firſt to be a Prophet, ſecondly a Prieſt, and thirdly to be a King: For his Kingly office brake foorth but ſeldome in the time of his abaſement, ſometimes it did, to ſhew that he was

ruler

ruler, and commander of Earth, and Sea, and Divels, and all, he wrought miracles, but the glorious manifestation of his kingly office it was after his resurrection.

Christs priestly office the principall.

Now the fundamentall, the chiefe office to which he was annoynted by the Spirit (upon which the rest depends) it was his Priestly office: for wherefore was his teaching, but to instruct us what he must doe and suffer for us, and what benefit we have by his Sacrifice reconciliation with God and freedome from the wrath of God, and right unto life everlasting by his obedience to the cursed death of the crosse. And how comes he to be a King to rule over us by his holy Spirit, and to have a right unto us? But because as a Priest hee dyed for us first, *He washed us with his blood, he purged us with his blood, and then he made us Kings and Priests*, Rev 1. All other benefits came from this, *he washed our soules in his blood first*, whatsoever wee have from God, is especially from the great worke of Christ as a Priest abasing himselfe, and dying for us, and thereupon hee comes to bee a Prophet and a King, thus we see the order of Christs offices, how they come to be fruitfull to us, the rest especially by vertue of his priestly office.

Note this by the way, Christs priestly office includes two branches, his sacrificing himselfe for us, a Priest was to offer Sacrifice, and to pray for the people, our Saviour Christ did both in the daies of his humiliation; in his

prayer in *Ioh.*17. there as a Prieſt, he commends his ſacrifice to God before he died, and now he is in Heaven making interceſſion for us to the end of the world, he appeares for us there. We ſee then to what purpoſe God put the Spirit upon Chriſt, to enable him to be a Prophet, a Prieſt and a King, and thereupon to take away thoſe miſchiefes and evills that wee were ſubject and inthralled too, ſo that we have a ſupply for all that may any way abaſe us and caſt us downe, in the allſufficiency that is in Chriſt Jeſus, who was annoynted with the Spirit for this end.

Object. It may be objected, Chriſt was God himſelfe, hee had the Spirit and gives the Spirit, therefore how could the Spirit be put upon him?

Anſw. *How Chriſt both gives an receives the Spirit.* I anſwer, Chriſt is both God and Man, Chriſt as God gives the Spirit to his humane nature, ſo hee communicates his Spirit, the Spirit is his Spirit as well as the Fathers, the Spirit proceeds from them both. Chriſt as man receives the Spirit, God the Father and the Son put the Spirit upon the man-hood of Chriſt, ſo Chriſt both gives and receives the Spirit in diverſe reſpects, as God, hee gives and ſends the Spirit, the ſpiration and breathing of the Spirit is from him as well as from the Father, but as man he received the Spirit.

And this is the reaſon of it, next under the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghoſt, Chriſt the mediator was to be the ſpring, and originall of all comfort

comfort and good, therefore Chriſts nature muſt not onely be ſanctified and ordained by the Spirit, but he muſt receive the Spirit to inrich it: for whatſoever is wrought in the creature is by the Spirit, whatſoever Chriſt did as man he did by the Spirit. Chriſts humane nature therefore muſt be ſanctified, and have the Spirit put upon it. God the Father the firſt perſon in Trinity, and God the Son the ſecond, they worke not immediately, but by the Holy Ghoſt, the third perſon, therefore whatſoever is wrought upon the creature, it comes from the Holy Ghoſt immediately, ſo Chriſt received the Holy Ghoſt as ſent from the Father and the Son. Now as the Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, ſo he workes from the Father and the Son, he ſanctifieth and purifieth, and doth all from the Father and the Son, and knits us to the Father and the Son; to the Son firſt, and then to the Father, therefore it is ſaid, *The grace of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, the love of God the Father, and the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt*; becauſe all the communion we have with God is by the Holy Ghoſt, all the communion that Chriſt as man had with God was by the Holy Ghoſt, and all the communion that God hath with us and wee with God is by the Holy Ghoſt: for the Spirit is the bond of union betweene Chriſt and us, and betweene God and us, God communicates himſelfe to us by his Spirit, and we communicate with God by his Spirit. God doth all in us by his Spirit,

and

and we doe all backe againe to God by the Spirit, Becauſe Chriſt as a Head, as the ſecond *Adam* was to be the root of all that are ſaved, (as the firſt *Adam* was the roote of all that are damned) he was therefore to receive the Spirit and to have it put upon him in a more excellent and rich manner, for wee muſt know that all things are firſt in Chriſt, and then in us.

All firſt in Chriſt, then in us.

God choſe him firſt, and then he choſe us,

God ſingled him out to be the Saviour, the ſecond *Adam*, and he cals us in Chriſt.

God juſtified Chriſt from our ſinnes, being our Surety taking our ſinnes upon him, we are juſtified, becauſe hee by his reſurrection quit himſelfe from the guilt of our ſinnes, as having paid the debt.

Chriſt is *the firſt fruites of them that riſe againe*, we riſe againe, becauſe he is riſen.

Chriſt firſt aſcended, we aſcend in Chriſt.

Chriſt is firſt loved, we are loved in the Beloved.

Chriſt is firſt bleſſed, *we are bleſſed with all ſpirituall bleſſings in Ieſus Chreſt*. So whatſoever is in us, we have it at the ſecond hand, we have the Spirit in us, but he is firſt in Chriſt, God hath put the Spirit in Chriſt, as the ſpring, as the ſecond *Adam*, as a publike perſon, that ſhould receive the Spirit for us all, *he is firſt in all things, Chriſt muſt have the preheminence*, he hath the preheminence in all, both before time, in time, and after time, in election, in whatſoever

ſoever is done here in this world, and in glorification, all is firſt in Chriſt, and then in us, he is the elder Brother.

We muſt underſtand this, to give Chriſt his due honour, and reſpect, and to know whence we have all we have. Therefore the Spirit is ſaid here firſt, *to be put upon Chriſt.* Wee have not the Holy Ghoſt immediately from God, but we have him as ſanctifying Chriſt firſt, and then us, and whatſoever the Holy Ghoſt doth in us, he doth the ſame in Chriſt firſt, and hee doth it in us becauſe in Chriſt. Therefore in *Iohn* 14. Chriſt ſaith, *He ſhall take of mine*, whatſoever the Holy Ghoſt works in us, hee takes of Chriſt firſt.

How is that?

How the Spirit takes of Chriſt and gives to us.

Thus; The Holy Ghoſt comforts us with reaſons from Chriſt, he dyed and hath reconciled us to God, therefore now God is at peace with thee. Here the Holy Ghoſt takes a ground of comfort from the death of Chriſt. When the Holy Ghoſt would raiſe a man up to holineſſe of life, he tels him, Chriſt thy Saviour and Head is quickned, and is now in Heaven, *therefore we ought to riſe to holineſſe of life.* If the Holy Ghoſt be to worke either comfort or grace, or any thing, he not onely doth the ſame thing that he did firſt in Chriſt, but hee doth it in us by reaſons from Chriſt, by grounds fetched from Chriſt, the Holy Ghoſt tells our ſoules that God loves Chriſt firſt, and he loves us in Chriſt, and that we are thoſe that God gave

Chriſt

Christ for, that we are those that Christ makes intercession for in Heaven, the Holy Ghost witnesseth to us the love of the Father, and the Sonne, and so hee fetcheth from Christ whatsoever he works.

And hence the worke of the Holy Ghost is distinguished from illusions, and delusions that are nothing but franticke conceits of comfort that are groundlesse. The Holy Ghost fetcheth all from Christ in his working and comfort, and he makes Christ the patterne of all, for whatsoever is in Christ, the Holy Ghost (which is the Spirit of Christ) workes in us, as it is in Christ. Therefore in *Iohn* 1. 13. it is said of *his fullnesse we receive grace for grace*, that is, grace answerable to his grace. There are three things that we receive answerable to Christ by the Spirit.

Three things we receive by the Spirit.

We receive grace, that is, the favour of God answerable to the favour God shewes his Son, he loves his Son, he is gratiously disposed to him, and he loves us.

So grace habituall, wee have grace in us answerable to the grace in Christ, wee have love answerable to his love, patience answerable to his Patience, Obedience and Humility answerable to that in Christ, the Spirit workes a conformity to Christ in all things.

Likewise in the third place, the Spirit assures us of the same priviledges that issue from grace: Christ is a Son, the Spirit tells us wee are sonnes,

ſons, Chriſt is an heire, the Spirit tells us wee are heires with Chriſt; Chriſt is the King of Heaven, and Earth, the Spirit tells us that wee are Kings, that his riches are ours, *thus wee have grace for grace*, both favour and grace in us, and priviledges iſſuing from grace, we have all as they are in Chriſt. Even as in the firſt *Adam* we receive of his emptineſſe, curſe for curſe, ill for ill, for his blindneſſe and rebellion wee are anſwerable, wee are borne as hee was after his fall, ſo in the ſecond *Adam* by his Spirit, we receive *grace for grace*.

Hence iſſues this, that our ſtate now in Chriſt is farre more excellent then our ſtate in *Adam* was.

Queſt. How doth it ſpring hence?

Anſw. Thus, Chriſt is God-Man, his nature was ſanctified by the Spirit, hee was a more excellent perſon, he gives and ſends the Spirit, *Adam* was onely a meere man, and therefore his goodneſſe could not be ſo derived to his poſterity: For how ever the Holy Ghoſt was in *Adam*, yet the Holy Ghoſt did not ſo fill him, he was not ſo in him as in Chriſt, the Holy Ghoſt is in Chriſt in a more excellent manner, for Chriſt being equall with God, he gave the Holy Ghoſt, the Holy Ghoſt comes from Chriſt as God, now the ſecond *Adam* being a more excellent perſon, wee being in Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*, we are in a more excellent, and in a more ſafe eſtate, we have a better keeper of our happineſſe then *Adam* he

Whence it is that our ſtate in Chriſt is better then it was in Adam.

he being a meere man, he could not keepe his owne happinesse, but lost himselfe and all his posterity, though he were created after the Image of God, yet being but a meere man, hee shewed himselfe to be a man, that is, a changeable creature: but Christ being God and man, having his nature sanctified by the Spirit, now our happinesse is in a better keeping, for our grace hath a better spring, the grace and sanctification wee have it is not in our owne keeping, it distills into us answerable to our necessities, but the spring is indeficient, it never failes, the spring is in Christ. So the favour that God beares us, it is not first in us, but it is first in Christ, God loves him, and then he loves us, he gives him the Spirit, and us in him. Now Christ is the keeper both of the love of God towards us and the grace of God, & whatsoever is good, he keeps all for us, he receives all for himselfe and for us, he receives not only the Spirit for himselfe, but he receives it as Mediator, as Head, *for we all of his fullnesse receive grace for grace*, he receives it as a fountaine to diffuse it (I say) this shewes us our happy and blessed condition in Jesus Christ, that now the grace and love of God and our happinesse, and the grace whereby we are sanctified and fitted for it, it is not in our owne keeping originally, but in our head Christ Iesus.

These bee comfortable considerations and indeed the life and soule of a Christians life and comfort, if we conceive them aright, they will quicken

quicken us to obedience, and wee ſhall know what the Goſpell is. To come to make ſome uſe of it.

I might obſerve this, that none ſhould take that office upon them to which they are not called of God, nor qualified by his Spirit, eſpecially Miniſters, becauſe Chriſt did not ſet upon his office, till the Spirit was put upon him, the Spirit muſt inable us, and fit us for every thing, but I leave that, and come to that which concernes us all.

Firſt then hath God put the Spirit upon Chriſt, as the Evangeliſt ſaith in *Ioh.* 3. 34. *Hee whom God hath ſent*, that is *Chriſt*, *hee ſpeaketh the word of God: For God gives him not the Spirit by meaſure*, God doth not ſtand meaſuring grace out to Chriſt, but hee powers it out upon him full meaſure, running over, becauſe he receives it not for himſelfe alone but for us, we receive the Spirit by meaſure, *Eph.* 4. 7. *According to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt*, Chriſt gives us all a meaſure of ſanctifying knowledge and of every grace, *till wee grow to be a perfect man in Chriſt*. Therefore it is called the *firſt fruits of the Spirit*, *as much as ſhall fit us for Heaven, and grace ſufficient, though it be not that meaſure wee ſhall have hereafter, or that wee would have here.* Chriſt had a full meaſure, the fullneſſe of a fountaine, diffuſive, not onely abundance for himſelfe, but redundance, and overflowing for the good of others, hee being the head of the Church, not onely a head of eminence, but of influence

influence to bestow, and convey all grace in him to all his members, proportionable to the service of every member, therefore he received not the Spirit according to measure, that is, sparingly, but it was showred upon him, hee was filled and cloathed with the Holy Ghost. Is it so?

Vse. *To see whence our supply is.*

Let us labour then to see where to have supply in all our wants, wee have a full treasury to goe to, all treasure is hid in Christ for us, what a comfort is this in any thing we want? If wee want the favour of God, goe to his beloved Christ, desire God to love us *in his Beloved*, and to accept us in his gracious Son, in him whom he hath made his servant, and annoynted with his Spirit for that purpose.

In want of grace.

If we want particular graces, goe to the well-head Christ, consider of Christ now filled for us as it was in *Aaron*, the oyle that was powred on *Aarons head ran downe to his beard, and to the skirts of his cloathing*, the meanest parts of his garment was bedewed with that oyle; so the graces of Gods Spirit powred upon our head Christ, our *Aaron*, our high Priest runne downe upon us, upon all ranckes of Christians, even upon the skirts, the weakest and the lowest Christians, every one hath *grace for grace*, we all partake of the oyle, and annoynting of our spirituall *Aaron*, our High Priest. If wee want any thing therefore, let us goe to him, *I can doe all* (saith S. *Paul*) *in Christ that strengtheneth me*, goe to him for patience, for comfort, for every thing,

thing, becauſe God hath put his Spirit upon him, to ſupply all our wants, he hath *the oyle of gladneſſe above his fellowes*, but for his fellowes, *Pſal.*45. he hath the oyle of grace more then any, but it is not onely for him but for us all. Therefore let us have comfortable meditations of the fullneſſe of Chriſt, and make uſe of it, all this is for me, in *Col.*2. S. *Paul* ſets it out, *in him the fulneſſe of the God-head dwells perſonally* (for that is meant by σωματικῶς) and it followes after, *in him wee are compleate.* Wherefore is all the fullneſſe that is in him? to ſhew that in him *we are compleate*, ſo in 1 *Iohn.* 5.20. to ſhew how the ſpirits of the Apoſtles agree, in this ſaith he, *wee know that the Sonne of God is come in the fleſh, and hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Sonne Ieſus Chriſt, This is true God and eternall life*, Chriſt is true God and eternall life for us all, for our comfort, *We know that the Sonne of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding*, &c. *Little children keepe your ſelves from Idols.* How doth this depend upon the other? Thus, will you goe to Idols, ſtocks and ſtones, deviſes of mens braine for ſupply of grace and comfort? Chriſt whom God hath ſent, hee is come into the world, *He is God and eternall life; God hath given eternall life, and this life is in his Son*, therefore why ſhould you goe to Idols.

What is the ground of Popiſh Idolatries and abhominations, they conceive not aright of

Ground of Idolatry.

the fulnesse of Christ, wherefore he was ordained, and sent of God: for if they did, they would not goe to Idols and Saints, and leave Christ. Therefore let us make this use of it, goe out of Christ for nothing: If we want favour, goe not to Saints, if we want instruction goe not to traditions of men, he is a Prophet wise enough, and a Priest full enough to make us accepted of God, if we want any grace, hee is a King able enough, rich enough, and strong enough to subdue all our rebellions in us, and hee will in time by his Spirit overcome all, *Stronger is he that is in us then he that is in the world.* The spirit in the world, the Divell and divellish minded men they are not so strong as the Spirit of Christ: For by little and little the Spirit of Christ will subdue all. Christ is a King, goe not out of him therefore for any thing. *Babes keepe your selves from Idols*, you may well enough, you know whom to goe too.

To carry ourselves answerable to our riches.

Therefore let us shame our selves, is there such a store-house of comfort and grace every way in Christ? Why are wee so weake and comfortlesse? Why are we so dejected as if we had not such a rich husband? All our husbands riches are ours for our good, we receive of it in our measure, why doe wee not goe to the Fountaine, and make use of it? Why in the middest of aboundance, are we poore and beggerly? Heere we may see the misery of the world, Christ is a Prophet to teach us the way

to Heaven, but how few be there that will be directed by him? Christ is a King to subdue all our spirituall and worst enemies, to subdue those enemies that Kings tremble at, to subdue death, to subdue the feare of judgement, and the wrath of God, and yet how few will come under his government? *Christ is the light of the world*, yet how few follow him? Christ is the way, yet how few tread in his steps? Christ is our wisdome and our riches, yet how few goe to him to fetch any riches, but content themselves with the transitory things of this life? Men live as if Christ were nothing, or did nothing concerne them, as if he were a person abstracted from them, as if he were not a Head or Husband, as if he had received the Spirit only for himselfe and not for them, wheras all that is in Christ is for us, I beseech you therefore let us learne to know Christ better, and to make use of him.

To make use of Christ in our failings.

Againe, if Christ hath *the Spirit put upon him for us all*, then in our daily slips and errors make this use, to offer Christ to God with this argument, take an argument from God himselfe to binde him, God will bee bound with his owne arguments, we cannot binde him with ours, but let us goe to him and say, *Lord though I be thus and thus sinnefull, yet for Christ Iesus sake thy servant, whom thou lovest and hast put thy Spirit upon him to be a Priest, and to make intercession for me, for his sake pardon, for his sake accept.* Make use of Gods consecration of

Chriſt by the Spirit to God himſelfe, and binde him with his owne Mediator, and with his owne Prieſt of his owne ordaining, thou canſt not Lord refuſe a Saviour and Mediator of thine owne, ſanctified by thine own Spirit, whom thou haſt ſet apart, and ordained and qualified every way for this purpoſe, let us goe to God in the Name of this Mediator Jeſus Chriſt every day, and this is to make a good uſe of this, *That God hath put his Spirit upon him.*

How to know the Spirit is put on Chriſt for us

But to make a uſe of Tryall, how ſhall wee know that this comfort belongs to us, that Chriſt hath the Spirit put upon him for us or no, whether he be ordained a King, Prieſt and Prophet for us? That which I ſaid before will give light to this, we muſt partake of the ſame Spirit that Chriſt hath, or elſe wee are none of his members, as we partake of his name, ſo we muſt alſo of his annoynting, thereupon we are called Chriſtians, becauſe we partake of the annoynting and Spirit of Chriſt, and if we have the Spirit of Chriſt, it will worke the ſame in us as it did in Chriſt, it will convince us of our owne ill, of our rebellions, and curſed eſtate, and it will convince us likewiſe of the good we have in him. And then, *he is a Spirit of union*, to knit us to Chriſt, and make us one with him, and thereupon to quicken us, to leade us, and guide us, and to dwell in us continually, to ſtirre up prayers and ſupplications in us, to make us cry familiarly to God as

to

to a Father, to comfort and support us in all our wants and miseries, as he did Christ, *to helpe our infirmities*, as the Apostle at large in *Rom.*8. sets downe the excellent office of the Holy Ghost, what he doth in those that are Christs. Let us therefore examine our selves, what the Spirit doth in us, if Christ bee set apart to redeeme us, as a Priest? (Surely all his offices goe together) he doth by the same Spirit rule us, *Rev.*1. *He hath washed us in his blood, and made us Kings and Priests.* Whosoever he washeth in his blood he maketh him a King, and a Priest, he makes him by the power of his Spirit able to rule over his base corruptions, we may know then, whether we have benefit by Christ by his Spirit, not onely by the Spirit witnessing that we are the Sonnes of God, but by some arguments whereby the Spirit may witnesse without delusion, for though the Spirit of Christ tells us that we are Christs, yet the proofe must bee from guiding and leading, and comforting, and conforming us to Jesus Christ, in making us Kings, and Prophets, enlightning our understandings to know his will, and conforming us to be like him. The Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of power and strength, it will enable us to performe duties above nature, to overcome our selves and injuries, it vvill make us to vvant and to abound, it vvill make us able to live and to dye, as it enabled Christ to doe things that another man could not doe. So a Christian

can doe that, and suffer that that another man cannot doe and suffer, because he hath the Spirit of Christ.

At the least whosoever hath the Spirit of Christ, he shall finde that Spirit in him striving against that which is contrary, and by little and little getting ground, where there is no conflict, there is no Spirit of Christ at all, I will not be large in the point, onely I speake this by way of tryall to know whether wee have the Spirit of Christ in us or no, if not we have nothing to doe with Christ: For Christ saves us not as he is out of us onely, Christ was to doe something of himselfe that wee have no share in, onely the good of it is ours, hee was to redeeme us by his blood, to bee a Sacrifice, the title to Heaven and salvation was wrought by Christ out of us, but there is somewhat that he doth not onely for us, but hee works in us by his Spirit, that is, the fitting of us for that he hath given us title too, and the applying of that that he hath done for us. Whosoever therefore hath any benefit by Christ, he hath the Spirit to apply that to himselfe and to fit and qualifie him to be a member of such a Head, and an heire of such a Kingdome, whosoever Christ works any thing for, he doth also worke in them, there is a Spirit of application, and that spirit of application if it be true it is a Spirit of sanctification and renovation fitting us every way for our condition,

Let us not abuse our selves, as the world commonly

commonly doth, concerning Christ, they thinke God is mercifull and Christ is a Saviour. It is true, but what hath he wrought in thee by his Spirit, hast thou the Spirit of Christ? or *else thou art none of his, Romans 8.* Where ever Christ is he goes with his Spirit, to teach us to apply what Christ hath done for us, and to fit us to bee like him. Therefore let those that live in any sinnes against conscience, thinke it a diabollicall illusion to thinke God and Christ is mercifull, I but where is the worke of the Spirit? All the hope thou hast is onely that thou art not in Hell as yet for the time to come, but for the present I dare not say thou hast any thing to doe with Christ, when there is nothing of the Spirit in thee, the Spirit of Christ conformes the Spouse to bee like the husband, and the members to be like the Head, therefore begg of Christ that hee would annoint himselfe King in our hearts, and Prophet, and Priest in our hearts, to doe that that he did, to know his will as a Prophet, to rule in us as a King, and to stirre up prayers in us as a Priest, to doe in some proportion that that he doth, though it bee in never so little a measure, for wee receive it in measure, but Christ beyond measure, wee must labour for so much as may manifest to us the truth of our estate in Christ, that we are not dead but living branches.

The Spirit given more aboundantly since Christs ascention.

Now Christ gives and conveyes his Spirit especially, and most of all since his ascention,

and ſitting at the right hand of God, for after his reſurrection he declared his victory over all his enemies, and therefore was able to give the Spirit without oppoſition, and upon his reſurrection, death and hell, and the anger of God were overcome, and our ſinnes were ſatisfied for, now Chriſt was Head indeed having trod all his enemies under his feete, now he was enabled to give the Spirit, but upon his aſcention into Heaven, and his ſitting there, he was more enabled, for even as the Sunne, being ſo high above the Earth, doth convey his light and heate and influence upon the inferiour bodies, So Chriſt being ſo highly advanced is fitter to infuſe his Spirit and grace heere below ſince his exaltation, therefore the Church is fuller of grace, and grace hath beene more ſpread and diffuſed ſince the aſcention of Chriſt then before, and the *Evangeliſt* gives it as a reaſon, *The Spirit was not yet given, becauſe Chriſt was not aſcended*, intimating that after his aſcention, there was a more full portion of the Spirit given, God being fully appeaſed by the death of Chriſt, and Chriſt ſtaying the advantage that was fitteſt to give the Spirit, now God the Father gives the Spirit with the Sonne, ſo in both regards there was a greater fullneſſe of the Spirit. Therefore the Prophets ſpeaking of the times of Chriſt, eſpecially of his exaltation, ſhew that then they ſhould be filled with the Spirit, that the Spirit ſhould be powred out upon all fleſh more abundantly then

then before. And that is the reaſon that the Apoſtles ſo differed from themſelves, before and after Chriſts aſcention, what a wondrous alteration was there? *Peter* before, hee flies even at the voice of a maide, and they were full of contention, and vaine glory, but after we ſee when the Spirit, the Holy Ghoſt came downe after Chriſts aſcention into Heaven, how couragious, and valarous they were that they accounted it a matter of glory to ſuffer any thing, and indeed we have more or leſſe valour and courage, the more or leſſe Spirit we have, now they having received more abundance of Spirit, hereupon they were more couragious and undaunted at one time then another, and this abundance of the Spirit comes eſpecially ſince Chriſts advancement.

How Chriſt gives the Spirit

I.

In the miniſtry of the Word. Gal. 3. 2.

But how or by what meanes doth Chriſt give his Spirit to us? This Spirit that is ſo neceſſary for us, it is given by the miniſtery of the Goſpell, which is the miniſtery of the Spirit, *received ye the Holy Ghoſt by the workes of the law, or by the hearing of faith preached?* when the love of God in Chriſt, and the benefits by Chriſt are layed open in the preaching of the Goſpell to us, God gives his holy Spirit, the Spirit of Chriſt. Now God in Chriſt would ſave us by a triumphant and abundant love and mercy, and the Spirit of God never goes but where there is a magnifying of the love and mercy of God in Chriſt, therefore the miniſtery of the Goſpell, which onely diſcovers the

the amity and love of God to man-kinde being now reconciled in Christ, it is accompanyed with the Spirit, to assure us of our part and portion in those benefits: for the Spirit is the fruit of Gods love as well as Christ, Christ is the first gift, and the Spirit is the second, therefore that part of the word that discovers Gods exceeding love to man-kinde, leaving Angells (when they were fallen) in their cursed estate: and yet giving his Sonne to become man, and *a curse for us*, the discovery of this love and mercy of God, and of his Son Christ to us, is joyned with the Spirit: for by the Spirit we see our cursed estate without the love and mercy of God in Christ, and likewise we are convinced of the love of God in Christ, and thereupon we love God againe, and trust to his mercy, and out of love to him performe all chearfull obedience, whatsoever we doe else if it be not stirred by the Spirit, apprehending the love of God in Christ, it is but morallity. A man shall never goe to Heaven but by such a disposition, and frame and temper of soule as is wrought by the Holy Ghost, perswading the soule first of the love and favour of God in Christ. What are all our performances if they be not out of love to God? and how shall we love God except we be perswaded that hee loves us first? therefore the Gospell breeds love in us to God, and hath the Spirit together with it, working a blessed frame of sanctification, whereby we are disposed to every good duty.

duty. Therefore if we would have the Spirit of God let us attend upon the ſweete promiſes of ſalvation, upon the doctrine of Chriſt: for together with the knowledge of theſe things the Holy Ghoſt ſlides, and inſinuates, and infuſeth himſelfe into our ſoules.

Therfore the Miniſters of the Goſpell ſhould be much in laying open the riches of God in Chriſt; in unfolding Chriſt all other things will follow, as S. *Paul* in 2 *Tit.* 12. *The grace of God hath ſhined, hath appeared gloriouſly, teaching us to deny all ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts, and to live holily and ſoberly in this preſent world,* where the grace and love of God is perſwaded and ſhed into the ſoule all will follow.

What is the reaſon that former times were called darke times, and ſo they were, the times of Popery, a darke age? Chriſt was vailed, the Goſpell was vailed, there was no preaching of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, people were ſent to ſtocks and ſtones, and to Saints, and inſtead of the word, they were ſent to legends and ſuch things, Chriſt was obſcured, thereupon they were darke ages, thoſe ages wherein the Spirit of God is moſt, is where Chriſt is moſt preached, and people are beſt alway where there is moſt Spirit, and they are moſt joyfull and comfortable, and holy, where Chriſt is truly layd open to the hearts of people; the peaching of meere morallity, (if men be not carefull to open Chriſt, to know how ſalvation is wrought by Chriſt, and how all good comes by Chriſt) it

it will never make a man perfectly good, and fit him for Heaven, it may make a man reforme many abuses, like a Phylosopher, which hath its reward, and respect amongst men, but nothing to give comfort at the houre of death, and the day of judgement, onely that whereby the Spirit is conveyed is the knowledge and preaching of Christ in his state and offices.

2. *In obedience.*

Againe, the Spirit of Christ is given, in obedience to this Gospell, *Acts.* 5. 32. *Hee gives the Holy Ghost to them that obey him.* Now there is *the obedience of faith, and the obedience of life,* when the soule is wrought to obedience, to beleeve, and to be directed by God, then the Holy Spirit is given in a further measure still, the Holy Ghost is given to them that obey, to them that doe not resist the Spirit of God: for in the Ministery of the Gospell the Spirit is given in some degree to reprobates, it is offered, it knockes at the hearts of the vilest persons, that live in filthy and false courses of life, whose tongues, and bodies, are all instruments of an unsanctified soule to offend God, they have gracious motions offered them, but then they doe not obey them, therefore the Spirit seizeth not upon them to rule in them, they have the Spirit knocking upon them, he doth not dwell in them, and take up his lodging in them. The Spirit is given to them that obey the sweet motions of it. Now who is it that heares the blessed word of God, the blessed tidings of salvation, but he hath sweete motions of the Spirit

to

to be in love with God and the mercy of God, and to hate ſinne a little for a time, then preſently upon it corruption joynes and and ſwels againſt thoſe motions, and they onely reſt in the bare motion, and never come to any perfection. This is the ſtate of reprobates in the Church, they have many motions by the Holy Ghoſt, but their hearts are not ſubdued to obedience, not to conſtant obedience. Therefore if wee would have the Spirit of Chriſt, let us labour to ſubject our ſelves unto it, when we have any good motion by the Miniſtery of the Word, or by conference, or by reading of good things (as holy things have a ſavour in them, the Spirit breathes in holy exerciſes) Oh give way to the motions of Gods Spirit, we ſhall not have them againe perhaps, turne not backe thoſe bleſſed meſſengers, let us entertaine them, let the Spirit dwell and rule in us, it is the moſt bleſſed lodger that ever we entertained in all our lives, If wee let the Spirit guide and rule us, it will leade us and governe and ſupport us in life and death, and never leave us till it have raiſed our bodies, the Spirit of Chriſt in us at length will quicken our dead bodies, *Rom.* 8. it will never leave us till it have brought us to Heaven. This is the ſtate of thoſe that belong to God, that give way to the motions of Gods Spirit to rule and guide them; therefore if we would have the Spirit of Chriſt, let us take heed of rebelling againſt it.

This

This is the state of many of us (the Lord be mercifull to us, and cure us) that we doe not onely not receive the motions of the Spirit deepely into us, but if they bee such as crosse us in our pleasures and profits, though the Word and Spirit joyne together, there is a rising of the proud spirit of man against so much of the Spirit and the motions of it, and against such parts of the Word as crosseth us, this will bee laid heavy to our charge one day, that wee would bring the Spirit of God to our corruptions, and not bring our hearts to Gods Spirit, and hereupon be those phrases in the Scripture of *tempting* the Spirit, *Ananias and Saphira tempted the Spirit*, that is, when men will doe that which is naught, and try whether God will forgive them, and put it off or no, how many are there that tempt the Spirit? that put it off, perhaps I shall have the like motions another time, I shall have better occasion when I can gaine no more, when I can have my pleasures no more, *thus men resist the Spirit*, as Saint *Stephen* saith, that is when the Spirit discovers to them what they should beleeve, and what they should doe, and they see it crosseth their resolution to be naught, hereupon they resist the worke of the Spirit, that else would close with their soules and sanctifie them, and fit them for Heaven, if they would give way to it. And there is a quenching of the Spirit, that is, when men have sweet motions of the Spirit, and presently by some ill language or course

courſe of life they defile their veſſels, and quench the ſweet motions of the Spirit. Let us take heed of all theſe, of *tempting*, of *reſisting*, and *quenching the Spirit*: For undoubtedly (living in the boſome of the Church) we have many heavenly motions, eſpecially thoſe that have ſo much goodneſſe in them as to attend upon Gods ordinances, they have thoſe motions at thoſe times, that they never have after perhaps, but they either reſiſt them, or quench them, and wrong and grieve the Spirit, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Greive not the Spirit of God, whereby you are ſealed to the day of redemption, Epheſ.* 5. Men ſpeake or doe ſomewhat that grieves the Spirit of God in them, their conſcience being enlightned by the Spirit tels them that they have done that which is naught, yet notwithſtanding for this or that advantage, to pleaſe this or that company, they will ſpeake or doe that which is ill, and then the Spirit that was given in ſome meaſure before is grieved at this carnall and ſinnefull liberty. Therefore if yee would be guided by the Spirit of Chriſt, take heed of all theſe and of ſuch like courſes.

Another meanes whereby we may come to obtaine the Spirit, is *Prayer*; to bee guided by the Spirit of Chriſt, (next to Chriſt himſelfe our Saviour) is the moſt excellent thing in the world, therefore it is worth the begging and getting, *Luke* 11. 13. *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them* 3. *Prayer.*

them that aske him? Insinuating, that wee can aske nothing greater then the Spirit. A man that hath a sanctified judgement next the forgiveneſſe of his ſins through Chriſt, hee begs nothing more then the Spirit to witneſſe the favour of God in Chriſt, and to fit him for other favours, eſpecially to fit us for the world to come. God can give nothing greater, nor we can beg nothing greater, if wee have ſanctified judgements, then the Spirit of God, therefore let us have a high eſteeme of the holy Spirit of the motions of it, and out of an high eſteeme in our hearts beg of God the guidance of the Spirit, that he would leade us by his Spirit, and ſubdue our corruptions, that wee may not bee lead by our owne luſts, and ſo conſequently by Satan that leads us by our owne luſts in the way that leads to perdition. So much for that, *I will put my Spirit*, &c.

And he ſhall ſhew judgement to the Gentiles.

After Chriſt was fully furniſhed, as he was furniſhed with the Spirit of God, and with a commiſſion from Heaven, from *Father, Sonne*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, having this high commiſſion, and gifts for it by the Spirit, he fals upon his office preſently, we are never fit for any thing till wee have the Spirit, and when we have the Spirit it is active, and vigorous and working, *He ſhall ſhew judgement to the Gentiles.*

Object. What is meant by judgement here?

By

Answ. *What meant by judgement here.*

By judgement is meant lawes, hee shall declare his lawes, his truth, and together with declaring the truth of the Gospell, which is his Evangelicall law, hee shall declare it in the soule, and bow the neck of the inward man to the obedience of this his judgement. Christ then by himselfe and his Apostles and Ministers, shall declare his truth (which is the scepter of his governement) to the Gentiles, and not onely declare it, as Princes doe their lawes by Proclamations and Statutes, *&c.* but hee shall declare it to the heart by his Spirit.

Now in the hebrew language, ordinarily, wise governement is called *judgement, hee shall declare judgement*, that is, his manner of governement, he shall declare it by his Spirit, and cause our Spirits to submit to it.

And indeed grace is called judgement, in the phrase of Scripture, the grace of sanctification, because it is agreeable to judgement, to Gods law, it is agreeable to it, and wrought by it in the soule, and it is the best judgement, for grace whereby the soule is subject to the judgement and law, and rule of God, it must needs be the best judgement, because it is agreeable to Gods judgement, grace judgeth aright of things, and subdues all things, the affections and inward man to it selfe.

The word of God called judgement.

But why is the word of God called judgement?

It is called so frequently in the Psalmes, and

in other places of Scripture, because the truth of God shewes what God doth judge. Judgement is originally in God who is the first truth, and the first good, the first truth judgeth best of truthes, what is light, and what is darkenesse, what is truth, and what is error, what is good, and what is ill, what is safe, and what is dangerous; all will grant that God is the first light, and the first truth, therefore hee doth originally judge of the difference of things: for even as in the creation he put an eternall difference betweene light and darkenesse, and severed things that were in the confused *Chaos*, and established an orderly world, that Heaven should be above, and earth below, that one thing should be above another, and all in judgement. So in the governing of man-kinde, he shewes his judgement by his word, and that word shewes how God judgeth of things. Lawes shew, judgement what is to be done, and what is not to be done. The Gospell shewes Gods judgement, what he will have us beleeve and hope for, and how wee must carry our selves in way of thankefullnesse if we doe this, then the Gospell, the word of God judgeth what shall become of us, *wee shall be saved*, if we doe the contrary, the word againe judgeth what our state shall be, *wee shall be damned*, so it is called judgement, because it judgeth what is good and what is ill, and because it determineth what shall become of us if we obey or disobey.

Here-

Hereupon it is that the word of God is a glaſſe wherein we may ſee our owne condition infallibly, what will become of us, the Word of God judgeth thus, he that lives in ſuch and ſuch ſinnes ſhall come to this end, God will inflict theſe and theſe judgements upon him. *Judgement* in the firſt place is, you ſhall doe this and this, becauſe it is good. *Judgement* in the ſecond place is, becauſe you have not done this, this ſhall befall you, ſo the *Evangelicall* judgement of the Goſpell is this, *He that repents and beleeves ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life:* but he that armes and furniſheth his heart to rebellion, he ſhall periſh in his ſinnes, *He that believeth not is condemned allready, the wrath of God hangs over his head.* So from this, that Gods truth is called judgement, we may know how to judge of our ſelves, even as God judgeth in his Word, wee may ſee our owne faces and conditions there, hee that is a man of death may ſee it in the Word, and he that is appointed for happineſſe may there ſee his condition.

Sanctification judgement.

Againe, not onely the Word of God, the Goſpell (which is out of us in the booke of God) is called judgement, but the worke of God in the ſoule, *Sanctification is called judgement*, hence we may obſerve, what is the moſt judicious courſe in the world, the moſt judicious frame of ſoule, when it is framed to the judgement and truth of God, being the firſt truth. When a man is ſanctified and ſet in a

holy frame, it is from a ſanctified judgement the fleſh is ſubject to the Spirit, heere is all in a gratious order, the baſer part doth not rule the higher, but the higher part of the ſoule, a ſanctified judgement rules all, becauſe the whole is in right judgement, therefore ſanctification is called judgement, and other courſes though they be never ſo faſhionable are but madneſſe, and folly, and diſorder in the cenſure of the Scripture, nothing is judgement and true wiſedome, but ſanctification and obedience flowing from ſanctification, Therefore ſaith *Moſes* in *Deuteronomie, Then ſhall you be knowne to bee a wiſe people when you obey the Lawes that I have given you*, onely that ſhewes a wiſe judicious man, to be obedient to Gods truth by the Spirit ſanctifying him. Without the truth of God and the Spirit in us framing our ſoules anſwerable to the truth, we are out of all good order: For then the affections that ſhould bee ruled, rule us, then the body, and the luſts of the body, rule the ſoule, and the Divell rules by both, what a ſhamefull diſorder is this, when a man ſhall be ruled by the Divell and his owne luſts that he ſhould treade under feete and trample upon? and this is the ſtate of all that have not this judgement in them, that have not the word of God written in their hearts bowing and bending them by the Spirit of God to ſpirituall obedience, to proove this I will name but one place among many, *Titus* 3. 3. heer ſhewes the ſtate of all men, that are not brought

brought into ſubjection by this judgement, by the Word and Spirit of truth. *We our ſelves* (ſaith he) *were ſometimes fooliſh and diſobedient*, till this judgement is ſet up in us, wee are fooliſh in our underſtandings, and diſobedient in our wills and affections, deceived and miſled by the Divell, and our owne lufts: for that followes upon folly, thoſe that are fooliſh and diſobedient are deceived and led away to eternall deſtruction, *There is a way that ſeemes good in a mans owne eyes, but the iſſues of it are death*, ſaith *Salomon*, this is the ſtate of all men that are not led with the judgement of Gods truth and Spirit, ſanctifying and framing their ſoules to obedience, *they are fooliſh and diſobedient and deceived*, and ſo it will proove with them in the end, *Serving diverſe luſts, and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hating one another.* Now when God by his bleſſed Truth and Spirit ſets up his rule in the heart, it brings all into captivity, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, it brings all the inner man into ſubjection. *The Word of God is the weapon of God, theſe judgements are mighty in operation together with the Spirit, to beate downe all ſtrong holds and to ſet up another judgement there, it brings all into captivity to the truth and command of God, and to the motions of the Spirit*, the Word and Spirit beate downe all the ſtrong holds that are raiſed up in the heart by Satan, and our corruptions, ſo wee ſee here what is meant by this phraſe, *Hee ſhall declare judgement to the Gentiles.* It is a militant

word, therefore J have ſtood ſomewhat the longer in unfolding of it.

Grace wrought by preaching

Now this is wrought by the preaching of the Goſpell, *Hee ſhall declare judgement to the Gentiles*, all grace comes by declaring, *The Goſpell is the power of God to ſalvation.* Let but the Goſpell (which is Gods judgement how men ſhall be ſaved, and how they ſhall walke in obedience by way of thankefullneſſe to God) be declared, and all that belong to God ſhall come in, and yeeld homage to it, and bee brought in ſubjection. The Divell in the *Antichriſtian* ſtate knowes this well enough, therefore he labours to hinder the declaration of judgement by all meanes, he will not have Gods judgements but mens traditions declared, he knowes the declaring of Gods judgements will breed an alteration quickly in mens diſpoſitions: For when hee ſaith, *Hee ſhall declare judgement to the Gentiles*, he meanes the conſequent as well as the thing, he ſhall ſo declare judgement that they ſhall yeeld ſpirituall obedience and come in and be ſaved.

Let the Divell doe his worſt, let all ſeducers of ſoules doe their worſt, if they would but give way to the preaching of the Goſpell, let but judgement be declared, let Gods arme be ſtretched forth in delivering the truth, hee would ſoone gaine ſoules out of the captivity and bondage of Satan, they know it well enough, therfore by all the wayes they can they ſtop the preaching of the Goſpell and diſ-

grace

grace and hinder it, and set up mens traditions instead of the Gospell, but I will not inlarge my selfe farther upon these wordes, but goe on to the next.

Hee shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man heare his voice in the streetes.

Christs mild carriage.

These wordes set downe the mild, and sweete, and amiable manner of Christs carriage upon earth here in his first comming to worke the great worke of our redemption, he did not carry the matter in an outward glorious manner, in pompe, but he would have his miracles concealed oft times, and himselfe hidden, his God-head was hid under the vaile of his Manhood, he could not have wrought our salvation else, if the divell and the world had knowne Christ to be as he was, they would never have made those attempts against him, therefore considering he had such a dispensation to work our salvation, as a King, Priest, and Prophet, he would not cry, and contend, and strive, hee would not come with any great noise.

Difference betweene the giving of the law and Gospell.

Now here is an oppofition to the giving of the law, and likewise to the comming and carriage of civill Princes. You know when the Law was given all the mount was on fire, and the earth thereabout quaked, and trembled, and the people fled, they could not indure to heare the voice of God speaking in the mount, there was such a terrible smoake and fire, they

were all affraid, thus came *Moſes:* now did Chriſt come as *Moſes?* was the Goſpell delivered by Chriſt as the law was, in terrors and feares? Oh no; Chriſt came not in ſuch a terrible manner in thunder and lightning, but the Goſpell it came ſweetly. A Dove, a mild creature lit upon the head of Chriſt when he was Baptiſed, to ſhew his mild manner of carriage, and he came with bleſſing in his mouth in his firſt Sermon of all, *Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit, bleſſed are they that mourne, bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe.* The Law came with curſes, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to doe them.* Chriſt came in another manner, the Goſpell was delivered in a mild ſweete manner, Chriſt as an Ambaſſador came ſweetly to intreat and beſeech, there is a crying indeed, but it is a crying out of love and intreaty, not a ſhouting in a terrible manner as was at the giving of the law, no nor as at the comming of other civill Princes into a citie with ſhouting and noiſe of trumpets, with pompe and ſtate, and great attendants. Chriſt came not into the world to execute his kingdome and office in ſuch pompe, and noiſe, as it is ſaid of *Agrippa, Acts.25.23. hee came with great pompe,* ſo worldly Princes carry things thus, and it is needfull in ſome ſort, people muſt have ſhewes and pompe, the outward man muſt have outward things to aſtoniſh it withall, it is a pollicy in ſtate ſo to doe, but Chriſt came

in

in another manner, he came not to make men quake and tremble that came to ſpeake and deale with him, he came not with clamour and fierceneſſe: for who would have come to Chriſt then? But he came in a mild, and ſweete, and amiable manner; wee ſee a little before the text, upon occaſion of the inference of theſe wordes, he commands and chargeth them that they ſhould not diſcover him and make him knowne, when he had done a good worke hee would not have it knowne.

Now there are three things eſpecially inſinuated in this deſcription, *hee ſhall not ſtrive nor cry, neither ſhall any man heare his voice in the ſtreete.* That Chriſt ſhould not be outwardly glorious to publiſh his owne excellency, nor contentious, he ſhould not cry nor quarrell, nor hee ſhould not be clamarous, if hee had any wrong, to be all on fire preſently, but he ſhould be as a meeke Lambe, he ſhould make no noiſe, he ſhould not come in vaine glory, or clamour, *&c.*

But here wee muſt know that Chriſt was a wiſe diſcerner of the fitneſſe of times: for ſometimes he would have things publiſhed, ſometimes he would not, ſometimes hee vvould be knovvne, ſometimes he would not. Chriſt in his ſecond comming, ſhall come all in majeſty and glory with his Angells, and all the earth ſhall appeare before him, but now his wiſedome told him (now hee came to ſave the world as a Prophet, Prieſt and King, to worke

mans

mans salvation) that he must hide and conceale himselfe, and so hee ordered all his courses by discretion, every Sacrifice must be salted with salt, every thing should be seasoned with the salt of discretion, this is the steward of all our actions, to know what is fit, Christ knew it was fittest to conceale himselfe now at this time.

To take heed of vaine glory.

Now by Christs example we should learne this, not to bee vaine glorious, not to make a great noyse, you have some if they doe any thing that is good, presently all the world must know it, this was not Christs disposition; it is a disposition that is hardly wrought out of mans heart without an exceeding great measure of the Spirit of God: For we see good men have been given this way. *David would number the people that it might be knowne what a great Monarch he was, what a great number of people he had,* he was a good man, yet vaine-glorious, he smarted for it. So good *Hezekias*, Ambassadors were sent to him from the King of *Babylon*, and that they should know that *Hezekiah* was no beggerly Prince, *out must come the vessels of the Temple, and all his treasures, to shew what a rich King the King of Iudah was.* His vaine-glory cost him all his riches, as the Prophet told him. So the Disciples before they received a great measure of the Spirit, how vaine-glorious were they? They contended for the higher place, therefore they advise Christ to goe up to *Hierusalem*, that he might bee knowne, *As Iehu* said to

Ionadab

Ionadab, come up and ſee my zeale for the Lord of Hoaſts, he accounts it nothing unleſſe it bee ſeene, ſo fleſh and blood, if there be any thing done that is good, all the world muſt know it preſently. Chriſt chargeth them that no noyſe ſhould be made, but that they would conceale him.

What ſhould we learne hence?

To be of Chriſts diſpoſition, that is, to have no more care of the knowledge of things then the light of the things themſelves will diſcover, to doe works of light, and if the things themſelves will breake foorth to mens eyes and *they muſt ſee our light ſhine*, then let them, and imitate our good works, but for us to blazon them abroad our ſelves, it is not the Spirit of Chriſt.

Labour for humility.

Let us labour to have humility of ſpirit, that that may grow up with us in all our performances, that all things that we ſpeake and doe may ſavour of a ſpirit of humility, that we may ſeeke the glory of God in all things more then our owne.

And let us commit the fame and credit of what we are or doe to God, he will take care of that, let us take care to bee and to doe as wee ſhould, and then for noyſe and report, let it bee good or ill as God will ſend it: Wee know oft times it falls out that that which is precious in mans eye is abhominable in Gods, if wee ſeeke to bee in the mouthes of men, to dwell in the talke and ſpeech of men, God will abhorre

horre us, and at the houre of death it will not comfort us what men speake or know of us, but sound comfort must be from our owne conscience and the judgement of God: therfore let us labour to be good in secret, Christians should be as minerals, rich in the depth of the earth, that which is least seene is his riches, wee should have our treasure deepe: For the discovery of it, we should be ready when wee are called to it, and for all other accidentall things, let them fall out as God in his wisedome sees good. So let us looke through good report and bad report to Heaven, let us doe the duties that are pleasing to God and our owne conscience, and God will be carefull enough to get us applause; Was it not sufficient for *Abell*, that though there was no great notice taken what faith he had, and how good a man he was, yet that God knew it, and discovered it? God sees our sincerity and the truth of our hearts, and the graces of our inward man, he sees all these, and he values us by these, as he did *Abell*; As for outward things, there may bee a great deale of deceit in them, and the more a man growes in grace, the lesse he cares for them; as much reputation as is fit for a man will follow him in being and doing what hee should, God will looke to that. Therefore we should not set up sailes to our owne meditations, that unlesse wee bee carried with the winde of applause, to bee becalmed and not goe a whit forward, but we should be carried with the Spirit of God and

with

with a holy deſire to ſerve God, and our brethren, and to doe all the good we can, and never care for the ſpeeches of the world, as St. *Paul* ſaith of himſelfe, *I care not what ye judge of me, I care not what the world judgeth, I care not for mans judgement, this is mans day*; Wee ſhould from the example of Chriſt, labour to ſubdue this infirmity which wee are ſicke of naturally. Chriſt concealed himſelfe till hee ſaw a fitter time. We ſhall have glory enough, and be knowne enough to Divells, to Angels and men ere long, therefore as Chriſt lived a hidden life, that is, he was not knowne what hee was, that ſo hee might worke our ſalvation, ſo let us bee content to bee hidden men. A true Chriſtian is hidden to the world till the time of manifeſtation comes; when the time came, Chriſt then gloriouſly diſcovered what hee was; ſo wee ſhall bee diſcovered what wee are, in the meane time let us be carefull to doe our duty that may pleaſe the Spirit of God, and ſatisfie our owne conſcience, and leave all the reſt to God; Let us meditate, in the feare of God, upon theſe directions for the guidance of our lives in this particular.

FINIS.

GODS INQVISITION,

In two Sermons

By the late Reverend and Learned Divine RICHARD SIBS,

Doctor in Divinity, Master of Katherine Hall in Cambridge, and sometimes Preacher at GRAYES INNE.

GEN 18.21.

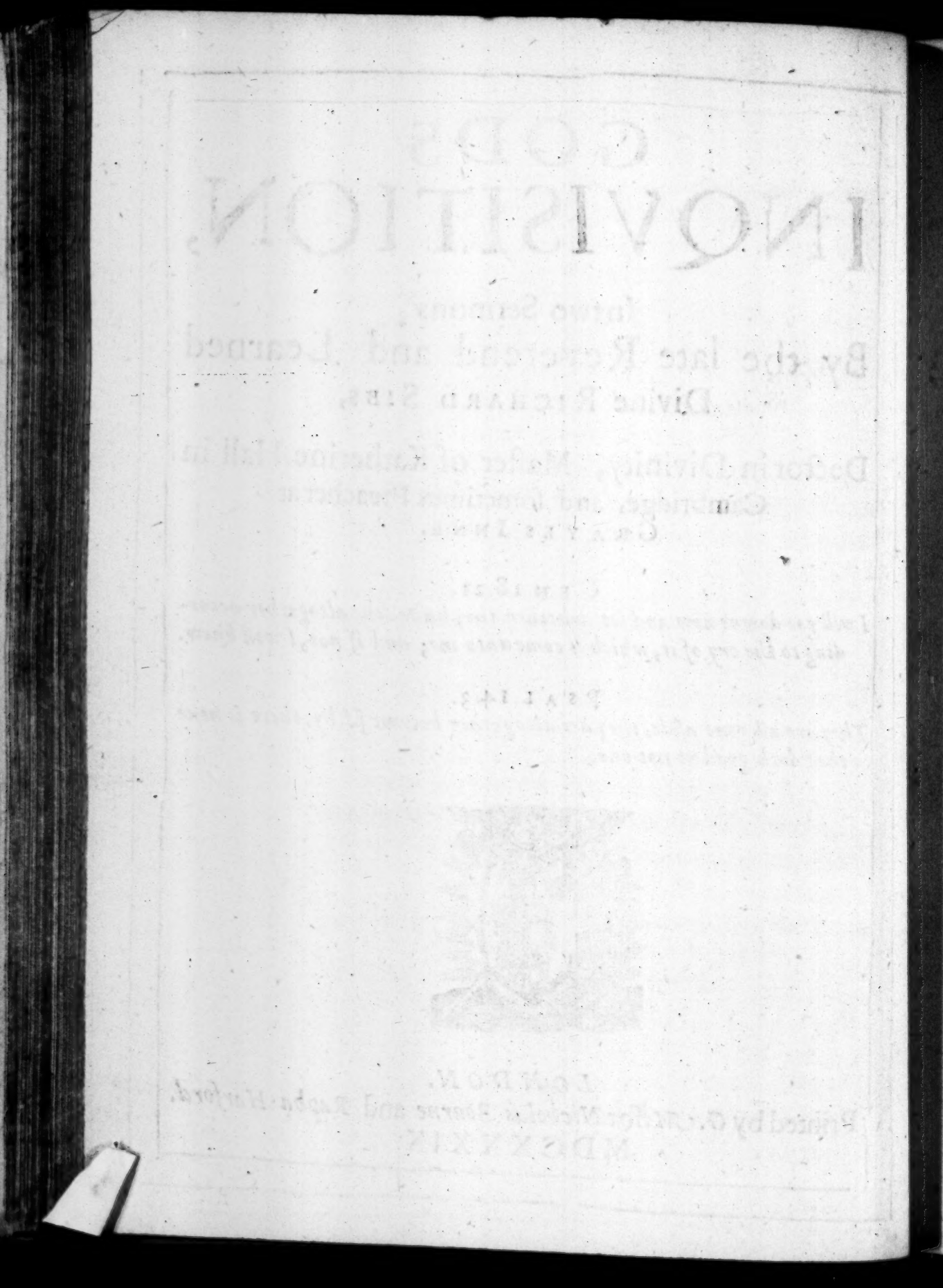
I will goe downe now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

PSAL.14.3.

They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good no not one.



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MDCXXXIX.



GODS INQVISITION.

IERE. 8. 6, 7.

I hearkened and heard, but they ſpake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedneſſe, ſaying, what have I done? every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe rusheth into the battell.

Yea the ſtorke in the Heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the time of their comming, but my people know not the judgement of the Lord.

UPON the ſinnes of people it hath beene alway Gods courſe to ſend his Prophets to warne them before hand, and afterwards upon that to obſerve how they profit by that warning, and thereupon he takes occaſion to proceed anſwe-

rably: God usually exerciseth a great deale of patience ere he strikes: he made the world in six daies: but he is six thousand yeares in destroying it.

Meaning of the words.

In this verse after the holy Prophet had menaced the judgement of God upon them, there is set downe what use they made of it. Alas! *They spake not aright, no man repented him of his wickednesse, saying, what have I done?* And least they should object, how doe you know this? He saith here it is upon inquisition, *I hearkened and heard.* So the words containe Gods inquisition or enquiry, and then Gods evidence upon that inquiry, together with a complaint. His enquiry, *I hearkened and heard.* For we must apply these words to God, there is the same phrase, *Mal. 3.16. The Lord hearkned and heard, and a Booke of remembrance was written before him,* so here, *I hearkened and heard,* here is the enquiry.

Parts of the words.

Then secondly, the evidence upon the enquiry, *They spake not aright.*

And thirdly, the complaint upon that evidence; set downe

First positively, *They repented not of their wickednesse,* which is amplified, 1. From the generality of this their impenitency, *No man repented him,* and 2. From the cause of it, want of consideration, they did not say, *what have I done?* If they had called themselves to account concerning what they had done, certainely they would have repented.

2. Com-

2. Comparatively; *They turned to their course as the horse rusheth into the battell.*

Lastly, superlatively, preferring the skill of the poore Storkes and Cranes, and the Turtle, and Swallow, before the judgement of his senseleſſe and stupid people. *The Storke in the heavens knoweth her appointed time, and the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow: But my people know not the judgement of the Lord.* This is the summe of the words.

First of Gods enquiry, *I hearkened and heard.* Ere *Sodome* was destroyed, *The Lord came downe to see whether there were such cause or no.* God is most just, he will see cause for his judgements: He hath no delight in punishing. When hee judgeth it is not out of his Soveraignty; but out of his justice; he doth it not as a Soveraigne Lord, but as a just judge. Now a judge must doe all upon inquisition and evidence, therefore saith he, *I hearkened and heard.* Where by the way the gods of the earth to whom he hath communicated his name should learne hence, not to be rash in their judgements, but to have sound evidence, before they passe sentence. *I hearkened and heard,* To *hearken* is more then to heare, to apply ones selfe with some affection to heare a thing.

I. *Gods inquiry.*

God is all eare, as he is all eye, hee hath an eare every where, he hath an eare in our hearts, he heares what wee thinke, what we desire, hee sees all the secret corners of our hearts, therefore when he saith here, *I hearkened and heard,*

it is by way of condescending to our capacity.

We may learne hence briefly, *That God hath an eare, and an eye to our carriage and dispositions, to our speeches and courses.* If we had one alway at our backs that would enforme such a man and such a man what we say; one that should booke our words and after lay them to our charge, it would make us carefull of our words. Now though we be never so much alone, there are two alwaies that heare us, *God hearkens and heares*, and Gods deputy in us, *conscience hearkens and beares*; God bookes it, and conscience bookes it. As God hath a book wherein he wrote us before all worlds, and the booke of his providence for our bones, and all things that concerne us; So he hath a booke for our workes and words. *Mal. 3. 16. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a booke of remembrance was written before him,* &c. So here *I hearkened and heard.* God, and conscience note and observe every thing.

To enforce care in our carriage

This doth impose upon us the duty of carefull and reverent walking with God: Would we speake carelesly, or ill of any man, if hee heard us? When we slight a man, we say wee care not if he heard us himselfe; But shall wee slight God so? Shall we sweare and lye, and blaspheme, and say we care not though God heare us that will lay every thing to our charge, not onely words but thoughts? *We shall give an account for every idle word, and for every idle thought,*

Mat. 12. 36.

thought, and ſhall we not regard it? It is from the horrible prophaneneſſe of the poyſonfull rebellious heart of man that men doe not conſider theſe things, *God hearkens and heares*, hee is at our ſtudies, hee is at our windowes, hee heares us in our chambers, when wee are in company, when we meete together, when we take liberty to cenſure and detract, when wee ſweare and revile. What if men heare not, yet conſcience heares, and God heares? and when God ſhall lay open the booke of conſcience, and lay before a man all his naughty ſpeeches, and wicked works, what will become of him then for not making uſe of this principle, that *God hearkens and heares*? God ſees now with what minds and affections we come about this buſineſſe, whether it bee formally to put off God, to make it a cover for our ſinnefull courſes after, as if God were beholding to us for what we doe now, and therefore might the better beare with us, though we make bold with him hereafter, he not onely heares what we ſay, but ſees our mindes and purpoſes, nay *hee knowes our thoughts long before they are*. This is the cauſe why godly men have alway walked ſo carefully and circumſpectly, they knew that Gods eye and eare was over them; as of *Enoch* and *Noah*, it is ſaid in this regard that *they walked with God*, and *Ioſeph* when hee was tempted, *Shall I doe this* (ſaith he) *and ſinne againſt God? and ſhall not God ſee if I doe this. Doth not hee ſee my waies and count all my ſteps*, ſaith

Ground of circumſpect walking.

Iob. So againe, What makes wicked men so loose? The Prophet tells, *Psal*, 94.7. they say, *the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Iacob regard it.* Or as it is, *Iob.* 22.12. &c. *Is not God in the height of Heaven? How doth God know, can he judge through the darke cloud, thicke cloudes are a covering to him that hee sees not, and hee walketh in the circuit of the Heavens.* Tush he regardeth not, he is immured and shut up there: but to such Atheists wee see what the Prophet answers, *Psal.* 64.8. *&c.* Yee brutish foolish people, shall he that makes others heare not heare himselfe? *he that planted the eare*, he that is all eare, *shall not hee heare?* As it makes good men walke holily and reverently, to consider of this, that God is present, and present as an observer, and a judge, so the want of taking this to heart makes wicked and carnall persons doe as they doe. So much briefly for these wordes, *I hearkned and heard.*

No man spake aright.

2. *The evidence.* But what evidence doth he give upon this inquisition? *they spake not aright*, which is amplified from the generality of this sinne, *No man spake aright*, the meaning is especially that *they spake not aright concerning the judgements of God threatned*: when God had threatned judgements, he hearkened, and heard what use they made of them, but *they spake not aright.*

Quest. In how many respects doe wee not speake aright

aright in regard of the judgements of God?

Answ. *Wee speake amisse of Gods judgements.*

First in regard of God, men speake not aright, when they do not see him in the judgement, but looke to the creature, to the second causes: as now in the time of the plague, to looke to the ayre and weather, and this and that, (which is a good providence,) and to forget him that is the chiefe, to kill doggs and cats, and to let sinne alone, to cry out; oh what ayre there is this yeere, and what weather it is! to talke of the second causes altogether, and to forget God, this is to talke amisse of Gods judgements threatned, in regard of God.

1. *In regard of God.*

Againe we talke amisse in regard of others, when we begin to slight them in our thoughts and speeches, oh they were careleſſe people, they adventured into company, and it was the careleſſeneſſe of the Magiſtrates, they were not well looked to, they were unmercifull perſons, &c. Is it not Gods hand? put caſe there might be ſome overſight; art thou ſecure from Gods arrow? he that ſtrooke them may he not ſtrike thee? this is to talke amiſſe of the judgement of God in regard of others; when wee thinke that God hath ſingled them out as ſinners above the reſt: as the Diſciples thought of the *Galileans, whoſe blood Pilate mingled with their ſacrifice.* No, no, ſaith hee, thinke not they were greater ſinners then the reſt, do not adde your bitter cenſure of the judgement of God on them, and make it heavier, (there is a woe to ſuch perſons, as adde afflictions to the afflicted,)

2. *In regard of others.*

except yee repent yee ſhall all likewiſe periſh. Is not the ripeſt corne cut firſt? God oft times takes thoſe away that are fitteſt for him, and leaves others to the cruelty of men, therefore by this raſh judgement there may be great wrong to men, and to wrong men in our cenſures, it is to talke amiſſe of Gods judgements in regard of others.

3. *In regard of our ſelves.*

Againe we talke amiſſe of Gods judgements in regard of our ſelves, when wee murmur and fret any way againſt God, and doe not ſubmit our ſelves under his mighty hand as wee ſhould.

1. *When we murmure againſt God.*

2. *When we make not uſe of his judgements.*

Againe, we ſinne againſt the judgements of God abroad, when we take liberty to inquire of the judgements of God abroad, and never make uſe of them; as now to be asking what number die of the plague weekely, and our hearts tremble not at it, wee lift not up our hearts to God, God be mercifull to us, Lord forgive our ſinnes, what will become of us? we had need to make our accounts even; this is to talke amiſſe of Gods judgements: It is a veyne that men have naturally, to enquire after newes of all ſorts; be it the ſharpeſt and bittereſt that may be, though it be the deſtruction, and ruine, and death of other men, whatſoever it be they deſire to heare it, if newes: in the meane time there is no care to make uſe of it, which is directly that for which theſe men here are ſaid to have talked amiſſe, *No man ſpake aright.* Why? *no man repented him of his wickedneſſe*, &c. as we ſhall ſee afterwards. Wee

ſhould

ſhould talke of the judgements of God to be bettered by them, we ſhould *learne righteouſneſſe*, when *the judgements of God are abroad*, and the arrowes that wound others we ſhould make warning arrowes to our ſelves: now when we trifelingly only inquire of theſe things, and are not mooved our ſelves, we talke amiſſe of Gods judgements. Iſa 26. 9.

Let us labour to talke of the judgements of God (when they are abroad,) as we ſhould. In regard of God, to raiſe our hearts above all ſecond cauſes, to ſee him in it: It is the hand of God, as the Scripture calls the plague, whatſoever the ſecond cauſes are, whether it be the ayre, and the divell mingling himſelfe oft times to corrupt the ayre, all is by Gods permiſſion and providence. We ſhould looke to the firſt wheele that leades the reſt, and ſets them going, wee ſhould ſee God in all, and therefore ſpeake reverently of him. And in regard of our bretheren, to ſpeake charitably of them, and thinke, it is the goodneſſe of God that hee hath not ſtricken us as hee hath them. And when we ſpeake of our ſelves, when the judgements of God are on us, let us humble our ſelves, and juſtifie God; wee may complaine: but it muſt be of our ſelves and of our ſinnes, that have brought judgements upon us, of our want of making uſe of the judgement of God upon others, or upon our ſelves: leſſer judgements would not ſerve turne, therefore God is faine to follow us with greater; let us alway

Vſe.
To talke aright of Gods judgements.

alway justifie God, and complaine of our selves, and then in regard of our selves, we *speake aright* of the judgements of God. Let us never speake of the judgements of God, but with affections fit for judgements, with awefull affections. *Shall the Lyon roare, and shall not the beasts of the forrest tremble?* Shall wee heare God roare in his judgements, *and heare the trumpet blowne*, and not be affected? wee see here how God complaines, that *when he harkened and heard they spake not aright*. Let us therefore make conscience of all our words. Wee shall if not now, yet at the day of judgement, *give account for every idle word*, for every cruell word, as it is in the prophesie of *Enoch*, cited in the Epistle of *Iude*: But especially let us take heed of our words when wee speake of Gods judgements; for it is the not speaking aright of them that is here especially meant: *I hearkened and heard but they spake not aright*. So much for the evidence, come wee now to the next clause, Gods complaint upon this evidence.

No man repented him of his wickednesse.

They did not repent of their wickednesse, and the fault was generall, *No man repented*, the first yeelds this instruction,

Doct. *When judgements are threatned and we repent not, God is offended.*

That it is a state much offending God, not to repent when his judgements are threatned.

God will not suffer it long unpunished, to be impenitent when his judgements are abroad, and

and threatned, much more when they have already ceazed upon our brethren: For that is the end of all his judgements to draw us neare to him, to draw us out of the world, and out of our sinnefull courses; when therefore we answer not, God must take another course, What is the plague and other judgements, but so many messengers sent to every one of us to knocke, and our answer must be, Lord I will repent of my evill waies, I will turne from my evill courses and turne to thee: If wee give this answer, God will take away his judgements, (or sanctifie them, and that is better) but when there is no answer, the messenger will not be gone, God will adde plagues upon plagues till we give our answer, till wee repent and turne from our wicked vvaies.

Simile.

Novv that vve may doe this, vvee must bee convinced thorovvly that the courses vvee live in, are unprofitable, dangerous, hatefull courses, and that the contrary state is better: For repentance is an after-vvit, and man being a reasonable creature, will turne from his vvay except hee see great reason vvhy; therefore there must be sound conviction that *it is a bitter thing to offend God*; vvee must indeed be convinced by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God usually takes the benefit of affliction, affliction together vvith instruction, instruction without affliction will doe little good: stripes and the Word must go together else we will not give God the hearing as we should.

Conviction a helpe to repentance.

Ier. 2. 19.

Therfore

Therfore that we may be ſoundly convinced of our ſins, we ſhould deſire God eſpecially in the houre of affliction to helpe our ſoules by his Spirit, that wee may bee convinced that our courſes are naught, that they are courſes diſhonourable to God, and dangerous to our ſelves, that ſinne defiles our ſoules, that it hinders our communion with God, which is the ſweeteſt thing in the world, that ſin puts a ſting into all our troubles; that ſin makes us affraid of that that ſhould bee comfortable to us, of death and judgement, and Gods preſence; that ſinne grieves the good Spirit of God that would take up his lodging in us; that it quencheth the motions of the Spirit that are ſent as ſweete meſſengers to us, to allure and comfort us: that ſinne grieves the good Spirit of God in others, that it grieves the good Angells that are about us, that it gratifies none but the Divell, the enemy of our ſalvation, that it defiles and ſtaines our ſoules, wherein the Image of God ſhould ſhine, that it doth us more harme then all the things in the world beſides (indeed nothing hurts us but ſinne, becauſe nothing but ſinne ſeperates us from God) that it ſhuts Heaven and opens Hell, and ſo makes us affraid of death, leaſt death ſhould open the gate to let us into Hell, in a word that it hinders all good, and is the cauſe of all ill; Let us conſider of this and worke it on our hearts.

The hurt wee have by ſinne.

And conſider withall our former courſes,

rip

rip up our lives from our child-hood, consider the sinnes of our youth together with our present sins, that so we may the better stirre up and awaken our consciences: Let us consider whether we are now in a state wherein wee could bee content that God should send his judgements upon us: Consider how wee have been scandalous to others, how we have drawn others to sinne, that the guilt of other mens sinnes will lye upon us; it may bee wee have repented, but have they? Consider the repetition of our sinnes, if wee have not committed them againe and againe, and other circumstances that may aggravate them. Let us labour to worke these things on our hearts, and desire the Spirit of God to convince our soules of the foulenesse and dangerousnesse of sinne. When we sinne against conscience, what doe we, but set the Divell in the place of God, wee make our selves wiser then God, wee leave Gods waies, as if wee could finde better, and more profitable, and more gainefull courses then his; sound conviction of this will moove us to repentance.

Not to delay repentance.

And let us be stirred up to repent presently; doth not God now warne you? Is it not dangerous living one houre in a state that wee would not dye in? May not God justly strike us on the sudden? Doe but purpose to live in sinne one quarter of an houre; may we not be taken away in that quarter? Is not repentance the gift of God, and are not gifts given according

ding to the good pleaſure of the giver? Waite therefore for the gales of grace, and take them when they are offered. Grace is not like the tide that ebbs and flowes, that we know when it will come againe, when we ſee it goe: No, God gives the gales of grace according to his good pleaſure, therefore take the advantage of the preſent motions of the bleſſed Spirit.

Danger of deferring.

The longer we live in any ſinne unrepented off, the more our hearts will be hardened, the more Satan takes advantage againſt us, the more hardly he is driven out of his old poſſeſſion, the more juſt it may bee with God to give us up from one ſinne to another, the underſtanding will be more darke upon every repetition of ſinne, and conſcience will bee more dulled and deaded. Thoſe that are young therefore, let them take the advantage of the youth and ſtrength, and freſhneſſe of their yeares to ſerve God. That which is blaſted in the bud, what fruit may we looke for from it afterward? Alas, when wee ſee the younger ſort given to blaſpheme and ſweare, to looſeneſſe and licentiouſneſſe, what old age may we looke for there? Againe what welcome ſhall wee expect, when we have ſacrificed the beſt of our ſtrength, and the marrow of our yeares to our luſts, to bring our old-age to God? Can this be any other then ſelfe-love? Such late repentance is ſeldome ſound, it comes (I ſay) from ſelfe-love and not from any change

Late repentance ſeldome true.

of

of heart. As in the the humility of wretched persons, a little before the judge comes, though they haue carried themselves as rebels before; yet then they will humble themselves: not out of any hatred to their courses, but out of feare of the judge. So it may be, now thou art arraigned by Gods judgements, thou forsakest thy sinnefull courses, not out of the hatred of thy sinnes (for if thou couldest thou wouldest sinne eternally, and that is the reason sinners are punished eternally: Because they would sinne everlastingly) but thou seest thou art in danger to be pulled away by Gods judgements. It is not out of love to grace, it is not from any change of nature, that thou desirest to be a new creature, that thou admirest grace to be the best state: but it is to avoid danger; not that thou carest for the face of God, to be reconciled to him: but to avoid the present judgement.

And what a staggering will this be to conscience, when a man shall deferre his repentance till Gods judgements seaze upon him? We see it is false for the most part: Because such persons that are then humbled, when they recover, they are as bad, or worse then ever they were. Therfore an Ancient saith well. *He that is good onely under the crosse, is never good*, it comes not from any change that God works; but meerely from selfe-love. Therefore presently let us repent of those waies that God convinceth our conscience to be evill wayes:

God

God may ſtrike us ſuddenly: Thoſe that forget God, and care not for him now, it may be juſt with God to make them forget themſelves, to ſtrike them with frenzy, to take away the uſe of their memories then, and when ſickneſſe comes, wee ſhall have enough to doe to conflict with ſickneſſe, we ſhall have enough to doe to anſwer the doubts of conſcience, Oh it would upbraid then! We ſhall thinke it a hard matter then to have favour from God, whoſe worſhip we have deſpiſed, the motions of whoſe Spirit we have neglected and reſiſted. Conſcience after long hardening in ſinne will hardly admit of comfort, it is a harder matter then it is taken for: Therefore even to day, preſently you that are young, now in the daies of your youth, now in the ſpring of your yeares, repent you of your ſinnes, before old-age comes, which indeed as *Salomon* deſcribes it, *is an ill time to repent in.* Alas! then a man can hardly performe civill duties, (as we ſee in *Barzillai*, he complaines *that in his old-age, he could not take the comfort of the creatures*) Therefore put not off this duty till then. And all, both young and old, now when the judgements of God are abroad in the world, take the advantage, returne to God, renew your covenants, make your peace now, now this danger doth warme our hearts a little, let us ſtrike the Iron now while it is hot, let us take the advantage of the Spirit now avvakening us vvith this danger. Our hearts are ſo falſe and

Conſcience after long ſinning hardly admits comfort.

so dull we have need to take all advantages of withdrawing our selves from our sinful courses.

And to incourage us to doe it, let us consider if we doe this, and doe it in time, wee shall have the sweetnesse of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts.

Benefits by timely repentance.

You will say, wee shall loose the sweetnesse of sin. I, but you shall have a most sweet communion with God. One day of a repentant sinner, that is reconciled to God, is more comfortable then a thousad yeares of an other man, that is in continuall feare of death and judgement. Oh the sweete life of a Christian that hath made his peace with God! he is fit for all conditions, for life, for death, for every thing: now by this wee shall have this grace and favour of God: the Lord will say unto us by his Spirit, *I am your salvation.* And besides, you shall have his grace renewing, and altering, and changing you, framing you to a better course of life. And he will be so farre from misliking any for their former sinnes, that hee will give them cause to love him the more, as wee see *Luk.7. Shee loved much: because shee had much forgiven her.* Christ we see upbraided not any of his followers with their former sinnes, hee regarded nor what they had beene formerly, *Zaccheus* the extortioner, *Mary Magdalen*, *Matthew* the Publican, *Peter* that denied him, wee never heare that he upbraided any of them, hee doth not onely vouchsafe mercy to *Peter* repenting; but advanceth him to his former

1. *The favour of God.*

office Apostolicall: so sweete a God have we to deale with; let this incourage us.

2. *Prevention of judgements.*

Againe it is the way to prevent Gods judgements, as wee see in *Nineveh* and others. Put case we repent not, we cannot goe safe in the citie, nor any where, but God may meete with us, and strike us with his arrow. The onely way to prevent his judgements, is to meete him speedily by repentance. This is the way not onely to turne away the wrath of God concerning eternall damnation, but outward judgements, as wee see *Ioel.*2, and many other places.

3. *Turnes all to good.*

Then againe, should we be stricken; if we have made our peace with God, if we have repented, all shall be welcome, all shall be turned to our good, wee know the sting is pulled out. If the sting of death be pulled out, if the malignity and poison of any sickneſſe (be it the plague or whatsoever) be pulled out, why should we feare it? It comes in love, and shall be turned to our good, and in the meane time God sweetens it. Here is a grand difference betweene the children of God and others, If the judgement of God light upon a repentant person, it comes from favour and love, to correct him for his former sinnes, it is turned to good, and in the meane time, it is sweetned with love, and mixed with comfort, and moderated, as it is *Isa.*27.7. *hath hee afflicted thee as I afflicted others?* No, hee moderates his judgements to his children, and not onely moderates

Difference betweene gods and others.

derates them, but sweetens them with comfort. If God doe correct a repentant person hee is no looser by it, nay he is a gainer, *It is good for mee that I have beene afflicted*, Oh the blessed estate of that person that repents and turnes from his evill wayes! But if a man doe not repent, but live still in sinne, what a state is hee in? God cares not for his prayers, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not heare my prayers*: and what a state is a man in, when his prayers that should beg for blessings, and avoid judgements, and procure deliverance, are not heard, *but shall be turned into sinne?* When God that is *a God hearing prayer*, shall not regard his prayer? What a case is this? Yet if we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we repent not of our sinnes, God will not regard our prayers.

1. *Prayer of impenitent not heard.* Psal. 66. 18.

Then besides that, there is a noise of feare in the unrepentant persons heart; whersoever he goes, he is affraid of the plague, affraid of sickness, affraid of death, affraid of every body: he knowes he hath his heaven here, hee hath not the sting of evills pulled out, therefore hee is affraid hee shall goe from the terrors of conscience to the torments of hell, his conscience speakes terrible things to him, what a cursed state is this? How can hee looke with comfort any way? If he looke to Heaven, God is ready to powre the violls of his wrath, to execute his vengeance on him. If hee looke to the Earth, hee knowes not how soone hee shall be layd there, or that the earth may swallow him up.

2. *Feare in wicked men.*

If he thinke of death it ſtrikes terrour to him, every thing is uncomfortable to an unrepentant ſinner. Let all this ſtirre us up to this duty of repentance, it is the end why God ſends his judgements: Firſt, he warnes us by his Word, and if we neglect that, he ſends judgements, and they ſeaze on us, that is a ſecond warning, and if leſſer judgements will not warne us, then he ſends greater, and all to make us repent, if we repent we give the judgements their anſwer, and he will either remove them or ſanctifie them, ſo much for that. A word of the generality.

No man.

No man repented of his evill wayes, wee ſee then,

Doct. *Generality is no plea.*

That Generality is no plea.

We muſt not follow a multitude to doe evill, we muſt not follow the ſtreame to doe as the world doth, will any man reaſon thus; Now there dye ſo many weekely of the plague, it is no matter whether I goe: I will goe now into any place without any reſpect to my company, *&c?* Will he not reaſon on the contrary: Therefore I will take heed, J will carry preſervatives about me, and looke to my company. Selfe-love will teach a man to reaſon ſo, The Infection is great, therefore I will take the more heed. And will not ſpirituall wiſedome teach us, the more ſpreading and infectious ſinne is, the

the more heed to take? *When all flesh had corrupted their way, then came the flood.* Generality of sinne makes way for sweeping judgements that takes all away. Therefore we have more reason to tremble, when the infection of sinne hath ceazed upon all, when *no man repents of his wickednesse*; a man should resolve, surely I will come out of such company, as we see *Lot departed out of Sodome*, and *David* in his time, *was as a Pelican in the wilderneſſe.* I will rather goe to Heaven alone then goe to hell and be damned with a multitude. *Multitude is no plea to a wise man.* Shall we thinke it a meanes to increase danger in worldly things, and shall we thinke it a plea in spirituall things. It hath beene the commendation of Gods children that they have striven against the streame and been good in evill times, *Redeeme the time: because the dayes are evill,* saith the Apostle. A carnall Christian saith, doe as the rest doe: but saith *David, Mine eyes gush out with rivers of waters, because men keepe not thy Law.* Doe not feare that you shall passe unrespected if you be carefull to looke to your selves this way; If there be but one *Lot in Sodome*, one *Noah* and his family in the old world, he shall be looked to as a Jewell among much drosse, God will single him out as a man doth his Iewels, when the rubbish is burnt. God will have a speciall care to gather his Iewels. When a man makes conscience of his waies in ill times and ill company,

God regards him the more for witneſſing to his truth and ſtanding for, and owning his cauſe in ill times, it ſhewes ſincerity and ſtrength of grace, when a man is not tainted with the common corruptions. *No man repented.*

What was the cauſe of all this, that they were thus unrepentant, and that generally *No man ſaid*

What have I done?

They did not ſay in their hearts and tongues, *What have I done?* they were inconſiderate, they did not examine and ſearch and try their waies. Here we ſee

Man can reflect upon his actions

Firſt, that a man can returne upon himſelfe, he can ſearch and try his owne waies, and cite and arreſt, and arraigne himſelfe, *What have I done?* This is a prerogative that God hath given to the underſtanding creature, the reaſonable ſoule, it can reflect upon it ſelfe, which is an act of judgement. The bruit creatures looke forward to preſent objects, they are carried to preſent things, and cannot reflect: But man hath judgement to know what hee hath done and ſpoken, to ſit upon his owne doings, to judge of his owne actions. God hath erected a tribunall in every man; hee hath ſet up conſcience for a regiſter, and witneſſe, and judge, *&c.* there are all the parts of judiciall proceeding in the ſoule of man. This ſhewes the

the dignity of man, and considering that God hath set up a throne and seate of judgement in the heart, we should labour to exercise this judgement.

Neglect of selfe judging cause of misery.

Secondly, God having given man this excellent prerogative to cite himselfe, and to judge his owne courses, when man doth not this, it is the cause of all mischiefe, of all sinne and misery. Alas! the vile heart of man is prone to thinke, it may be God hath decreed my damnation, and he might make mee better if he would. But why dost thou speake thus? O wicked man, the fault is in thy selfe, because thou doest not what thou mightest doe, hath not God set up a judgement seate in thy heart to deliberate of thine owne courses whether thou dost well or ill? and thy owne conscience (if thou bee not an Athiest and besotted) tells thee thou dost ill, and accuseth thee for it. An ordinary swearer, that by Athiesticall acquaintance, and poysonfull breeding is accustomed to that sinne, if he did consider, what good shall I get by this, by provoking God, who hath threatned that I shall not goe guiltlesse, and that *I shall give an account for every idle word*, much more of every idle oath, the consideration of this would make him judge, and condemne himselfe, and repent and amend his waies.

The exercising of this judgement, it makes a mans life lightsome, he knowes who he is, and whether he goes, it makes him able to an-

swer for what hee doth at the judgement seate of God, it makes him doe what he doth in cosidence, it perfects the soule every way.

Againe, whatsoever we doe without this consideration, it is not put upon our account for comfort, when we doe things upon judgement, it is with examination whether it be according to the rule or no. Our service of God is especially in our affections, when wee joy and feare, and delight aright. Now how can a man doe this without consideration? For the affections, whersoever they are ordinate and good, they are raised up by judgement; they are never good but when they are regular and according to judgement, when judgement raiseth up the affections, and we see cause why we should delight in God, and love him, and feare him more then any thing in the world, they are then an effectuall part of divine worship: But else they are flat and dead, and dull, if we waken them not with consideration. The heart followes the judgement, the braine and the heart simpathize, when we see cause and reason to love and feare, and worship God, we must *love God with all our mind*, that is, with our best understanding, we must see reason why we doe so.

How to use our understanding.

Therefore let us labour to use our understanding more this way. Is our understanding and judgement given us to plot for the world, to be judicious for the things of this life onely? No, but to be wise for the maine end, *to glorifie*

God

God, to save our soules, to get out of the corruption of nature, to maintaine our communion with God every day more and more. The end of our living in the world is to beginne Heaven upon earth: So to live here, as that we may live for ever in Heaven, whatsoever is done in order to this end is good, but nothing can be done to this end but upon due consideration. Let us improove our judgements for that end they are principally given us, not for particular ends, to get this or that mans favour, to get wealth, *&c.* but to use all as they may serve the maine: we know not how short a time we shall enjoy these things, and further then they serve for the maine, wee shall have no comfort of them ere long. Our projects should be to gaine glory to God, and to bring our selves and others to Heaven, there is excellent use of this consideration, this way it is one maine way to repentance, we see here, *No man repented*, because *no man said, What have I done?*

Hinderances of consideration.

Now if we would practise this duty, we must labour to avoid the hinderances. The maine hindrances of this consideration are

1. *Rage of lusts.*

1. The rage of lusts, that will not give the judgement leave to consider of a mans wayes, but they are impetuous, commanding, and tyranous, carrying men (as we shall see in the next clause) *As the horse rusheth into the battell*: We see many carried to Hell that never enjoyed themselves: but are alway under some

some base pleasure, when the Divell hath filled them with one pleasure, then they project for another, and never take time to say, *What have I done?* Oh the tyranny of originall corruption! If wee had in our eye, the vile picture of our nature, that carries us to things present, to profits, and pleasures, and gives us not liberty and leisure to bethinke our selves, would wee doe as wee doe? Alas wee see some men so haunted with their lusts, that they cannot be alone, they cannot sleepe, and when they are awake they must have musicke, as that King when hee had massacred a world of men, hee could not be quiet a whit, conscience raged so. When men follow their pleasures, they rob them of themselves. Therefore they are said in Scripture to be mad men, and fooles without wit, they are so taken up with the rage of their lusts that they have not liberty to enjoy themselves, they have no time for consideration.

2. *Too much worldly busines*

And then another hinderance is too much businesse; when men are distracted with the things of this life: they are overloaded with cares, with *Martha's* part, and so neglect *Maries* part, this makes men toile, and droile for the vvorld, and never consider vvhere they are, nor whether they goe, hovv it shall be with them vvhen they goe hence, hovv the case stands vvith them before God, whether they be gotten out of the cursed state of nature that vve are all borne in: they never thinke of this: but all the marrovv, and strength of their

soules

soules is eaten out with the world. Those that in their youth followed their lusts, when they come to yeares, are taken up with the world and slight religion: their mindes are imployed, how to get the favour of this man, and that, and so have not leasure to consider what will become of their soules: Therefore too much distraction with the things of the world is joyned with drunkennesse. *Bee not overcome with the cares of this life, with surfetting and drunkennesse*, saith Christ.

3. *It is a hard thing.*

Then, it is a secret and hard action, because it is to worke upon a mans selfe. It is an easie matter to talke of others, to consider other mens waies; You shall have mens tongues ready to speake of other men, they doe so and so, and thus they feede themselves with talking of other men, and in the meane time neglect the consideration of their owne state. And againe, it is a plausible thing; hee that talkes of other mens faults, gives an intimation that he is innocent, (and he had neede be so) It is easie, and plausible, men glory in it, it feeds corrupt nature to talke of other mens faults: But to come home to a mans selfe, that is a hard thing, it is without ostentation or applause, the world doth not applaud a man for speaking of his owne faults. Men are not given to retired actions, they care not for them, unlesse they have sound hearts, and this being a retired action that hath no glory nor credit with it, men are loath to come to it.

Then

4. *It preſents an unwelcome ſpectacle.*

Then againe it is not onely hard and ſecret, but this returning upon a mans ſelfe, it preſents to a man a ſpectacle that is unwelcome. If a man conſider his owne waies, it vvill preſent to him a terrible object. Therefore as the Elephant troubles the vvaters that he may not ſee his owne viſage: ſo men trouble their ſoules that they may not ſee vvhat they are, they ſhall ſee ſuch a deale of malice and ſelfe-love, and feare, and diſtruſt that they would not have others in the vvorld to ſee for any thing: but it is good to ſee it: For repentance and conſideration it is phyſicke, it is ſharpe but vvholeſome: It is better to have the phyſicke a day, then to have the ſickneſſe and diſeaſe all the yeare; ſo this conſideration and repentance though it be ſharpe, yet take it downe: for it will prevent Gods eternall judgement, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *If wee would judge and condemne our ſelves, we ſhould not be condemned with the world.* What an excellent thing is this that vve may keepe ſeſſions in our owne ſoules, and ſo need not be called to Gods aſſiſes? Men are called to that, becauſe they ſlubber over, and neglect this: Men will not keepe this ſeſſions in their owne hearts (vvhich they might doe, not onely quarterly, but daily) and thereby they make vvorke for God; is it not better now to unrip our conſciences by conſideration and repentance, then to have all ripped up then vvhen the Divell ſhall ſtand by to accuſe us, who will ſay this vvas done by my inſtigation, and

it

it is ſo, and our owne conſciences ſhall take part with the Divell and accuſe us alſo? It will be little for our eaſe to make God our judge, we might ſave the labour by putting conſcience to its office now, to examine our wayes every day, eſpecially now when God calles for it by his judgements, repentance is the covenant of the Goſpell, and repentance depends upon this conſideration, ſo much for that, *No man repented him of his wickedneſſe, ſaying, what have I done?* But did they ſtay here? No; it followes,

Every one turnes to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battell.

Every one hath his courſe, his way, whether good or evill, the courſe of a wicked man, it is a ſmooth way perhaps, but it is a going from God, it leades from him, and where doth it end? (for every way hath its end) It is a going from God to hell, there all the courſes of wicked men end. Examine then where thy courſe begins, and where it ends, from what thou walkeſt, and to what, whether thy courſe aime. Conſider where thy ſpeeches, and actions are like to end. The ſpecification and denomination of our waies to bee good or evill, is eſpecially from the end. The wicked they take their courſes, ſmooth wide courſes, the broad beaten way, where they may have elbow-roome enough, though it end in Hell, and

Every man hath his courſe.

and deſtruction: but the wicked and their waies are both hated of God; otherwiſe it is with Gods children, they may ſometimes ſtep into ill waies, but they have not an ill courſe, and God doth not judge a man by a ſtep, but by his courſe and way: Therefore conſider what is the tenour of thy life, is thy way good? Oh it is an excellent thing to be in a good way! For a man every day to repent of his ſinnes, to make his peace with God, to practiſe the duties of Chriſtianity in his generall calling, and in his particular calling to call upon God for a bleſſing. Such a mans way is good, it hath a good end. Perhaps hee may ſtep out of his way by the temptations of Satan, but that is not his courſe. The beſt man in the world for a paſſion on the ſudden may ſtep into an ill way as *David*, when he determined to kill *Nabal*: but it was not *Davids* way, therefore we ſee how ſoone he was put off with a little counſell, and how thankefull he was. *Bleſſed bee the Lord, and bleſſed be thou, and bleſſed be thy counſell*, &c. his way, and courſe was another way. And ſo on the other ſide the wickedeſt man in the world may ſet a ſtep in a good way for a fit, a very *Saul* may be amongſt the Prophets and ſpeake excellently and divinely; but all this while he is out of his way, his way is a courſe of wickedneſſe, to which therefore he will ſoone betake himſelfe againe, as it is heere ſaid of theſe men, *They turned to their owne courſes*,

God judgeth by the courſe not by a ſtep.

As

As the Horſe ruſheth into the battell.

Here it is comparatively ſet downe, If you would ſee how the *horſe ruſheth into the battell*, it is lively and divinely expreſſed, *Iob.* 39. 19. by God himſelfe. *Haſt thou given the horſe ſtrength? haſt thou cloathed his necke with thunder? Canſt thou make him affraid as a Graſhopper, the glory of his noſtrils is terrible, he paweth in the valley and rejoyceth in his ſtrength, hee goeth on to meet the armed men. Hee mocketh at feare, and is not affrighted: neither turneth hee backe from the ſword. The quiver ratleth againſt him, the glittering ſpeare and the ſhield. He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſſe and rage: neither believeth he that it is the ſound of the trumpet. He ſaith among the trumpets ha ha; and he ſmelleth the battell afarre off, the thunder of the captaines and the ſhouting.* There you have an excellent deſcription of this creatures fierceneſſe (the wit of man hath not ſuch expreſſions) and how *he ruſheth into the battell*, God to abaſe wicked men, compares them here to the horſe, not for that which is good in him, but for their violence in ill courſes; they ruſh into them, *as the horſe ruſheth into the battell.* Now the horſe ruſheth into the battell, 1. Eagerly, (as you ſee him deſcribed in the place of *Iob*) and 2. Deſperately, he will not be pulled away by any meanes, and then 3. Dangerouſly: For he ruſheth upon the pikes, and oft-

oft-times falls downe suddenly dead, he regards not the pikes nor guns nor nothing, but rusheth on in the danger. Heerein wicked men are like unto the horse, going on in their course eagerly, desperately, dangerously, 1. They go on eagerly, it is meate and drinke unto them, *They cannot sleepe untill they have done wickednesse*. They plot and study it, it is their delight, they are not in their element, but when they are talking wickedly, and corruptly, or deceiving, or satisfying their desires, the ambition and lusts of their corrupt nature. They can no more live out of these courses, then the fish can live out of the water: therfore they goe eagerly upon them.

1. *They are eager.*

2. *Desperate.*

And as they goe eagerly, so desperately, and irreclaimably too, nothing will restraine them, no thornes, nor troubles that can lye in their way; though God hedge in their wayes with thornes they breake thorow all: Even as *Balaam*, hee would goe on though there were a sword drawne before him, hee was more brutish and unreasonable then his poore beast, the very sword of the Angell could not moove that covetous wretch to goe backe. So it is with every wicked man, he goes on desperately, nothing will keepe him backe, and reclaime him: though God take many courses to doe it, by his Ministers, Magistrates, by the motions of his Spirit, by his judgements threatned, by judgements executed upon others, and upon themselves sometimes, yet they are so eager upon their sins, all this will not beate them off: they

love

love their sinnes better then their soules: nor is it onely open riotous persons that thus rush into sinnes, but civill rebellious persons also, that blesse themselves in their wayes, and it may be, live as irreligiously as the other. Take a covetous or an ambitious man, hee sacrificeth all to get such a place, &c. Such a man mockes Christ, (as the Pharisees mocked him, notwithstanding all his good Sermons and miracles) hee goes on desperately, nothing will hold him, hee breakes through all barrs and oppositions, he cracks his conscience, grieves the good motions of the Spirit, despiseth good counsell, and will venture upon the outward breach of lawes sometimes, rather then he will be defeated of his designes.

3. *Dangerously.*

And as they goe eagerly and desperately, so dangerously too, for is it not dangerous to provoke God? to rush upon the pikes? to runne against thornes? *Doe you provoke me to jealousie* (saith God) *and not your selves to destruction?* No; they goe both together, if you provoke me to anger, it will bee to your owne ruine. In *Levit.* 26. *God will walke stubbornely to them as they have done to him; and he will be froward with the froward, Psal.* 18. Those that are rebellious sinners, whom no bonds will hold, no counsell, that breake all lawes, as the man possessed with the Divell brake his chaines, the time will come that when God executes his wrath he will bee too good for them, the Divell will be too good for them,

hell will be too good for them, conſcience will teare them in pieces, and the judgement of God will ſeize on them. The way of wicked men is a wretched, a deſperate, and dangerous courſe: thou art ſtubborne againſt God, and he is ſo againſt thee: he will doe to thee as thou doeſt to him. Who are we, *are wee ſtronger then God?* Careleſſe atheiſticall perſons thinke they are: tuſh, they can wind out well enough: but they will finde it otherwiſe: Doe wee provoke the Lord to jealouſy, *are wee ſtronger then he*, ſaith the Apoſtle? let us lay this to heart.

1 Cor. 10 22.

Sinne hath defaced the Image of God in man

We ſee heere againe how ſinne hath cleane defaced the Image of God in man. *Man being in honour*, hee would become like God; he was weary of his ſubordination, hee would be abſolute, and becauſe he would be like God, God made him like the beaſt, and it is worſe to be like the beaſt then to be a beaſt: for the beaſt in his owne condition followes the inſtinct of nature: but to be like a beaſt, is for a man to unman himſelfe, to degrade himſelfe to a baſer condition then God made him in, and when a man doth this, hee is either in malice like the Divell, or in liceatiouſneſſe as the beaſt is, he is alway like the Divell or a beaſt till hee be a new creature. And that our nature is come to this, we are beholding to our owne yeelding to Sathan and his counſell, wee *ruſh as the horſe into the battell*; therefore let us beware of this. *Bee yee not as the horſe and mule*, &c. ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 32. 9. Who would not labour to be in a better

better condition? to be a new creature, to be changed by the powerfull ordinances, and Spirit of God? so much for that briefly; come wee now to the last clause,

Yea the Storke in the Heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow observe the time of their comming, but my people know not the judgement of the Lord.

Here is another expression comparative, or rather superlative; hee compares them to the *Storke*, and *Turtle*, the *Crane*, and *Swallow*, and prefers these poore creatures, in wisedome and providence, as going before men: *But my people know not the judgement of the Lord:* There needes no great explication of the wordes, [*Iudgement*] is directive, or corrective.

What meant by judgement.

The directive is the Law of God; setting downe Gods judicious course, This you shall doe, or if you doe not this you shall be punished. When we obey not Gods directive course, we meete with his corrective: for judgement is the stablishing of judgement: judgement of correction is the stablishing of judgement of direction. Gods Lawes must be performed, they are not skare-crowes; if wee avoid the one, wee shall runne into the other: if we doe not meete him in the judgement of his directive law, wee must be met with in his law corrective, (if we be good men,) or destruc-

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What meant by it here.

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What meant by (not knowing.)

[*They knew not*] that is, they did not make uſe of it: for in divinitie, thinges are not known when they are not affected. God knoweth all things, but when hee doth not affect and delight in us, he is ſaid *not to know us*: ſo wee are ſaid not to know, when vve doe not affect and make uſe of things. *They know not the judgement of the Lord.* They were not ignorant, hee had told them of vengeance, he had told them that they ſhould be carried into captivity: but they made not that uſe they ſhould of it, therefore they are ſaid not to knovv it. So the old world; it is ſaid they did not knovv of the flood: certainely *Noah* had told them of it: but vvhen they made not a right uſe of it, but went on brutiſhly, they knevv it not. It is all one not to knovv it at all, and not to make uſe of it. Wicked men thinke they knovv God, and they knovv religion vvell enough: I, but what uſe do they make of it in their particular courſe? that which vve doe not uſe, vve doe not knovv

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in religion. If ill be discovered, and be not avoided by thee, thou art a brutish senceleſſe creature, (thou doſt not know it) and ſo thou ſhalt be dealt with. *They know not the judgement of the Lord,* that is, They vvill not knovv it, it was affected ignorance. The words being thus unfolded, here firſt vve ſee,

That God confounds the proud diſpoſition of wicked men by poore ſilly creatures, the Crane, the Turtle, the Swallow and the like.

God ſhames the pride of men by the creatures.

What their wiſedome is we ſee by experience: in winter to fly from hard and cold parts to thoſe where there is a Spring, They are here in the moderate ſeaſon, and when the Summer is gone, they goe to a more moderate aire, where they may live better. For the life is the chiefe good of ſuch poore creatures, and their happineſſe being determined in their life, they labour to keepe that: they have an inſtinct put in them by God to preſerve their being by remooving from place to place, and to uſe that that may keepe life.

Now man is made for a better life, and there be dangers concerning the ſoule in another world, yet he is not ſo wiſe for his ſoule and his beſt being, as the poore creatures are to preſerve their being by the inſtinct of nature. When ſharpe weather comes they avoid it and goe where a better ſeaſon is, and a better temper of the aire: but man when Gods judgements are threatned and ſent on him, and God would have him part with his ſinfull courſes,

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and is ready to fire him, and to force him out of them: yet he is not ſo carefull as the creatures; *He will rather periſh and die, and rot in his ſinnes, and ſettle upon his dregs*, then alter his courſe: ſo he is more fottiſh then the ſilly creatures, he will not goe into a better eſtate, to the heate, to the Sunne-beames to warme him, he will not ſeeke for the favour of God to be cheriſhed with the aſſurance of his love, as the poore creature goeth to the Sunne to warme it till it be over hot for it. Man ſhould know what is good and what is evill: the new creature doth ſo: for with the change of nature, there is a divine wiſedome put into the ſoule of a Chriſtian, that teacheth him what is good and what is evill, that he may be carefull to avoide the evill: that he may diſcerne of things that differ: that he may ſay this is good for my ſoule, and all the world ſhall not ſcoffe me out of that that I know to be good with their prophane jeſting, they ſhall not drive me from that is good, & for courſes that are ill, they ſhall not draw me with all their allurements, I know what belongs to the good of my ſoule better then ſo. It ſhould be thus with Chriſtians, to be wiſe for their ſpirituall being, as the poore creatures, the *Storke* and the *Crane*, and the *Turtle* are to preſerve their poore life here with as much comfort as they can.

God takes inſtruction out of the booke of nature into his booke.

God takes out of the booke of nature things uſefull to inſert them into his divine booke: becauſe now no man ſhall be aſhamed to learne

of

of the creatures. Now since the fall man must learne of the poore creatures, and such a dunce is man, it is well for him, if he can learne of the *Ant, and Crane and Turtle*, and therefore doth God take lessons out of the booke of nature, and put them into his booke, to teach us to furnish our selves with divine mysteries, and instructions from the creatures. And indeed a gratious heart will make use of every thing, and have his thoughts raised with them: As the Prophet *Ieremy* here, he shames them by the example of the creatures. But of this by the way.

The thing most materiall (with which I will end) is this.

That God after long patience hath judgements to come on people, and it should be the part of people to know when the judgement is comming.

Doct. *After long patience God sends judgements.*

There is a season when God will forbeare no longer in this world. *They know not the judgement of the Lord*, the meaning is not in hell; though that may come in, that is implyed in all, but *they know not the judgement of the Lord*, that is, they know not the judgements that are comming. When judgements are comming God opens the hearts and understandings of his people to know them: as there is an instinct in the creatures to know when there will be hard weather.

Quest. *Answ.* *Iudgements comming may be knowne.*

But how shall we know when a judgement is neare hand?

I. *By comparing the sinnes with the judgement*

By comparing the sinnes with the judge-

ments: if there be such sinnes that such judgements are threatned for; then as the thred followeth the needle, and the shadow the body; so those judgements follow such and such courses. For God hath knit and linked these together, all the power in the world and hell cannot unlinke them, sin and judgement: judgement either correcting us to amendment or confounding us to perdition God therefore having threatned in the Scriptures such judgements to such sinnes, if we live in such and such sins, we may looke for such judgements. Thus a wise man by laying things together, the sins with the judgements, though he cannot tell the particular, yet he may know that some heavy judgement is at hand.

2. *When it hath ceazed on us in part.*

Againe, there is a nearer way to know a judgement, when it hath ceazed on us in part already: he that is not brutish and sottish, and drunke with cares and sensuality, must needs know a judgement when it is already inflicted, when part of the house is on fire: Wee see judgement hath ceazed now on the places where we live, and therefore we cannot be ignorant of it.

3. *By example of others.* Mat. 24. 38, 39

Againe, we may know it by the example of others, God keepes his old walks: Therefore it is said, *As it was in the daies of Noah, so shall it be when the Sonne of man comes: they were eating and drinking and marrying, and knew not till the flood came and tooke them away.* God will be like himselfe, if sinners be like themselves

selves, he will not change, if they change not, but will deale alike with them in his judgements as he hath dealt with others. What ground have we to hope for immunity more then others? We may rather expect it lesse; because we have their examples, and so they wanted those examples to teach them which wee have. In *Ieremy* 7. 12. (saith God) *Consider, looke to Shilo, and see what I did there, so will I doe to you.* So likewise the judgements on *Hierusalem* are a fearefull spectacle for us. These and other examples may helpe us to judge of our condition in regard of approaching judgements.

4. *Generall security.*

Againe, generall security is a great signe of some judgement comming. In the daies of *Noah* there was a generall sensuall security, notwithstanding the Prophet fore-told them of the deluge, they were eating, *&c.* and knew not till the flood came and tooke them away. So likewise if we eate and drinke and marry and build and be negligent and careless of making our peace with God, especially when warning is given us, it is a signe that some judgement either personall on our selves, or generally on the place we live in will come upon us: there is never more cause of feare then when there is least feare. The reason is, want of feare springs from infidelity (for Faith stirrs up Fearefullnesse and care to please God, *By Faith Noah mooved with feare, or reverence, builded the Arke*) it proceeds from infidelity not to bee afraid when

Want of feare the root of it.

when there is cauſe. Againe where there is no feare, there is no care: So the roote of the want of feare is infidelity, and the ſpring that comes from it is careleſneſſe, which alwaies goes before deſtruction; When men care not what becomes of them, if God be pleaſed ſo it is, if judgement come, ſo it is, the care is taken, *When men thus ſay, peace peace, then commeth deſtruction.* It is a terrible thing for a State or a Citty, or a particular perſon to be careleſſe: for the life of a Chriſtian it is a watching as well as a warring condition, he muſt be alway on his guard; therefore hee muſt not bee careleſſe, *and ſay peace, where God ſpeakes no peace.*

5. *The generalitie of ſinne.*

Againe vve may know that ſome judgement is comming by the univerſality and generality of ſinne, vvhen it ſpreads over all. When there is a generall infection of ſinne, vve may vvell feare the infection of the aire: ſinne hath infected the ſoules of men, therefore no vvonder if God in the plague have a hand in infecting their bodies. We ſee here before the Prophet threatned this deſtruction, there was a generality of ſinne. In the 10. verſe of this Chapter, he cryes out againſt the covetouſneſſe and falſe-dealing of the Prieſts and Prophets and men of all eſtates: And ſo alſo Chap. 5. verſe 4. *The poore they were naught, they were poore in grace and goodneſſe as well as in condition,* Then ſaith he, *I will ſee if there bee any goodneſſe in the great ones, I will get me to the great*

great men, verse 5. *they have knowne the way of the Lord, and the judgement of their God: but they have broken the yoke and burst the bonds.* When poore and rich, great and small, when all are sottish and brutish, *when all flesh had corrupted their waies*, as it was before the flood, then judgement must needs come: surely generality of sinne makes vvay for generality of judgement; as the deluge of sin made vvay for the deluge of water. So the overflow of sinne will make vvay for a flood of fire, God will one day purge the vvorld vvith fire.

Particular sins fore-showing judgement.

But now for particular sinnes whereby we may know vvhen judgement is comming, these they are, first Injustice and formality in Religion; vvhen men are generally unjust, destruction is neare, and indeed how can a Christian soule looke upon mens courses abroad, in these regards, *but he shall weepe in secret*; Is there not a generall injustice? Will not men get any cause so they have a good purse? Is not innocency trodden downe oft-times?

1. *Injustice.*

And so for Religion, it is generally neglected; indifferency and formality they are the sinnes of the times. Here is a sweet progresse! In Queene *Elizabeths* time vve began vvith zeale and earnestnesse; but now vve begin to stagger whither Religion is the better, we vvill joyne and put them together that God hath put an eternall difference betvveene, *Light and darkenesse*, Is this our progresse after so much teaching to put off God vvith formality and deny the povver?

2. *Formality in Religion.*

Againe,

Perſecution.

Againe, another particular ſinne foreſhewing judgement, is perſecution of Religion and religious men. When God is worſhipped with conſcience as he ſhould be, what imputations are laid on it. I neede not ſpeake, the world knowes vvell enough; Can God indure this, when conſcience of his ſervice ſhall goe under the brand of oppoſition? God is much beholding to the times, vvhen there is nothing ſo heartily hated as that. There are many things loathſome, as deboiſhneſſe, *&c.* But vvhat is ſo eagerly, and heartily hated as the povver of godlineſſe? that vvhich they have beene knowne to doe for conſcience, hath beene matter of reproach, and ruine almoſt to many men. If a man vvill not proſtitute his conſcience to a creature, to make an Idoll of him, to ſet him higheſt, if he will not be buxome, and cracke his conſcience for a creature, he is ſcarce thought fit to live in the world; vvill God ſuffer this, if theſe things be not amended? If any thing be good in Religion, the more the better, the more exact Chriſtian the better. Exactneſſe in other things is beſt: Is to be beſt in the beſt naught, when to be beſt in that which is not ſo good carries away the commendations? In 1. *Theſſa.* 2. *The wrath of God is come on them to the utmoſt; God they hate and they are contrary to all men.* This is a forerunner of deſtruction, the ſpitefull oppoſing of goodneſſe: God will not endure it long.

And

And so when men will goe on incorrigibly in sinne (as these here, *They rush as the horse into the battell*) when they will not be reclaimed, it is a fore-runner of destruction. Alas! the Ministers of God strive with men, *but they breake off the cords*, and cry, tush they are silly men shall we yeeld to them? Wee know what is for our gaine and profit and credit in the world better then so; Let us looke to that, and not be hampered in these religious bonds; No, we are wiser then so. Thus when men are incorrigible and account the wisedome of God starke folly, it is a signe of destruction. There is an excellent place for this, *Ezekiell* 24.12,13, 14. *She hath wearied her selfe with lies, and her great scum went not out of her, shee would not have her filthinesse taken from her. In thy filthinesse is lewdnesse: because I would have purged thee*, with the Word and the preaching of judgements, *and thou wouldest not be purged; therefore thou shalt not be purged til thou die, until I cause my fury to rest upon thee, I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to passe, I will do it.* When God goes about to purge us by his word, and we will not amend our waies, we will not stoope, but *strengthen an Iron sinnew, and a whores forehead.* We will not be purged, nay (saith God) thou shalt not be purged til I purge thee out of the world to hell, till my fury rest on thee, *I the Lord have spoken it, it shal come to passe.* There is another notable place, *Prov.29.1. He that is a man of reproofe*, that is, a man that is sermon proofe, that

that is often reprooved and yet carryes himselfe impudently and hardens his heart, and stiffens his necke, *he shall suddenly be destroyed*, he doth not meane but that he had warning enough: but because after long warning he hardens his necke, he shall suddenly be destroyed, when he lookes not for it, *and that without remedy*. There is the same phrase in 2. *Chron. ult.* 16. *There was no remedy*, when they did not regard Gods Ministers, that directed them the way to Heaven, but would live in rebellion against the meanes of salvation, then saith God, *there was no remedy*. God sent his messengers betimes, and had compassion on his people, he would not have had them perish: *They trifled with him and mocked his messengers*, accounted them weake men, they despised his Word, and misused his Prophets, and then the Lords wrath rose against his people, and *there was no* remedy. So when people are as those here in the text, that *they rush as the horse into the battell*, that they are Sermon-proofe, that when every Sermon they heare, as the hammer on the Smiths anvile, makes them harder and harder (as *Moses* speaking to *Pharoah* increased the hardnesse of his heart) it is a signe of destruction.

Now whether it be so or no, I leave it to your particular consciences, we that are Ministers tell you of your filthinesse, of your profaning the Name of God, and contempt of Gods Word; Whether have we gained upon you

you or no? Who hath left an oath? Who hath left his wicked courses and entered into a nearer communion with God for all our teaching? Blessed is that man; It is a signe God will not destroy him; it is a signe that in the generall visitation God will regard that man. But alas we may almost complaine with *Ieremy* in this Prophesie, *Iere.* 5.1. *Where he runnes up and downe to seeke a man.* Alas! They are very few, they are thicke sowen but come thinne up that obey the ordinance of God. It is some comfort that men will submit to the ordinance, that they will come to heare, some good may be learned, it is better then to keepe out of the compasse of Gods law (as those men doe that pretend they can reade Sermons at home, and so will teach God a course to bring men to Heaven) there is hope of men when they submit to Gods ordinance: But I beseech you, how are you affected now for the present? How doe you come now into the presence of God? If you will not amend, and resolve to enter into a new course; He that is often reprooved and will not come in, *judgement will come suddenly on him, without all remedy*: And it is good it should be without remedy: Because it is without excuse, you cannot pleade, and say that there were not Prophets among you. If the Heathens were hardened and given up to destruction, *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against them*, because they lived in a course of rebellion against the

the light of nature, ſhall you that have the light of nature, and the word of God, and the motions of his Spirit too, thinke to live in rebellion, and not be accomptable for it? It ſhall be eaſier for them that never heard of the word of God; where God hath magnified his mercy, he will exalt judgement, *thoſe that are lift up to Heaven in priviledges, ſhall be caſt downe to hell. Woe unto thee Capernaum*, &c. The more in priviledges, the more in judgement, if they be abuſed.

Unfruitfulneſſe Againe, another particular ſin whereby wee may diſcerne a judgement comming is, unfruitfulneſſe under the meanes; as the fig-tree when it was digged and dunged, and yet was unfruitfull, then it was neare a curſe. In *Heb.6.* the groud that is tilled, and manured, and hath the raine falling on it, it is then *neare unto curſing* if it bring not forth. Perhaps a Heathen, a Pagan, if hee were under the meanes, would bee fruitfull, therefore there might be hope of him: but thoſe that are under the meanes, under the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpell, under the influence of it, the Spirit working on their hearts, and yet they live in the ſin of unfruitfullneſſe; it makes way for judgement. *The axe is laid to the roote*; when men are taught, then the inſtrument of vengeance is laid to the roote, and downe they goe if they bring not forth good fruit.

Sinnes of omiſſion (when that all hath beene taught) are ſufficient to bring a man to judgement. At the laſt judgement, you have

not

not visited me in prison, you have not releeved the poore, &c. will be evidence enough to cast a man into hell. And the like may be said of the omission of other duties: when a man is called to place, when he hath opportunity to doe good, *hee hath a price in his hand, and yet hath no heart to lay it out to his power.* God hath made him a steward, and yet he is unfruitfull, and labours to undermine and ruine the state of others? What can such a man looke for, but the judgement of God to light on him first or last? if not present judgement on his body, yet to be given up to hardnesse of heart, and so to hell, which is worst of all.

Nay more, *decay in our first love* is a forerunner of judgement; when we love not God as we were wont, In *Rev.* 3. *I will take away thy Candlestick, because thou hast left thy first love.* Is there not such a plenty, and depth in good things, especially of the Gospell, whereby our sinnes are pardoned, and grace is given? is there not that sweetnesse in them, whereby to gaine our love more and more? Is there not a necessity to renew our peace? Why should we decay in our love? The things of the Gospell are so excellent, and so necessary, that when God sees them undervalued, it is a forerunner of judgement, let us take heed of decay in our affections. When there is no zeale for the truth, it is an ill signe.

Decay in our first love.

It is a good signe for the present that God hath some blessing for us, that now in our pub-

lique meetings, there is regard to Religion, and that in the first place, there is some zeale for the cause of God against those that would wrong the cause of Religion, wee have some cause to hope in respect of that. And let every one labour to stirre up the Spirit of God, and study how he may doe, and receive good, and be fruitfull, and warme in his affections, considering what excellent blessings we enjoy in the Gospell. What is the glory of the kingdome we live in above Popery? our religion that wee have, the sun-shine of the Gospell; now the riches of Christ are unfolded, wee have the key of Heaven, Heaven opened, what glorious times are these? The glory of the times is the manifestation of the Gospell, and shall we grow in the decay of our love? Is there not cause to grow in love to the Gospell, when God hath taken it from others, and hath given it to us? Now Idolatry is where true Religion was, and the Masse is said, where God was religiously worshipped in other places, and countries; Shall God deale so with us, and shall we not be in love with that truth? Since we have had the truth, what peace, and plenty have we had? And if ever we loose it, it will goe with other things: if God take away the truth, away goes our peace and prosperity; he will not take it away alone; it came not alone, and he will not take it away alone. Doubtlesse it must needes make way for judgement, when our love to so precious a jewell as the Gospell, shall begin

beginne to die and decay, when we shall begin to slight and disregard it. And so for any particular man that hath had good things in him, if they now begin to decay it is an ill signe that God is fiting him for judgement.

Well, but what shall we doe when judgements are comming? Wee see judgements are like to come, nay are in part come, the Plague of pestilence hath ceazed on us already; and then warre is threatned, and that by enemies that have beene foyled before: Foyled enemies are dangerous enemies if they bee proud; Now wee have proud enemies that have beene foyled, and Idolatrous withall, and what mercy can wee looke for from them? God fought against them for us from Heaven in some measure, and they being cruell provoked enemies are the lesse likely to shew any mercy. God is indeed so mercifull to us yet, that he hath taken us into his owne hands, rather then to give us up to the malice and fury of Idolatrous enemies. But yet those that can lay things together and consider the times; they shall see there is more cause of feare then is taken to heart.

Well and in this case what shall we doe?

What to doe in dangerous times

I.

Improove the time.

First in the interim betweene the threatning and the execution (there are some judgements in the cloud, and the storme seemes to hang over us, and the sword of the pestilence is drawn over our heads by the destroying Angell, though he hath not yet striken us in our parti-

cular, now in the time betweene the threatning and the execution) Oh improove it, make use of this little time; get into Covenant with God, hide your selves in the providence and promises of God, make your peace, deferre it no longer.

2. *Mourne for the sins of the land.*

And secondly, mourne for the sinnes of the time, that when any judgement shall come you may be marked with those that mourne. Take heed of the errours and sins of the times, least when a judgement comes you bee swept away in the generall judgement: but let us rather have our part with those that mourne, that God may give us our lives for a prey.

3. *Be watchfull.*

And thirdly, be watchfull, practise that duty; we have the plague to put us in minde of it, besides the threatning of dangers by enemies abroad: if we will not watch now and stand upon our guard, when will we? Let us be watchfull to doe all the good we can, to bee fruitfull, to be good stewards, to have large hearts. The time may come that we may be stripped of all, and we know not how soone, having but a little time, let us doe good in it, study all opportunities in these times, rouse up our sluggish soules. Feare it is awaking affection. *Iaakob*, when his brother *Esau* was ready to ceaze on him, *he could not sleepe that night*: We know not how soone the hand and arrow of God may strike us (besides other judgements) *let us shake off Security*, and doe every thing we doe sincerely to God. We may come to God

to

to make our account, we know not how ſoone, let us doe every thing as in his preſence and to him: in our particular callings, let us bee conſcionable, and carefull and fruitfull, let us doe all in our places to God, and not to the world or to our owne particular gaine: but doe it as thoſe that muſt give account ere long to God. Now God threatneth us to come, and give our account, who can be ſecure, he ſhall have life for a weeke or for one day? Wee cannot, *our times are in Gods hands:* we came into the world in his time, and we muſt goe out in his time: but now we have leſſe cauſe to hope for long life. This is to make a right uſe of the judgement of God to be watchfull in this kind.

Store up comforts.

And withall let us be good husbands now in the interim, betweene the threatning and the execution of the judgement let us ſtore up comforts from the promiſes of God, and ſtore up the comforts of a good life, we ſhall have more comfort of the meanes we have beſtowed wiſely then of that we ſhall leave behinde us. Thus if we doe, come what will, we are prepared. Many holy and heavenly men have beene viſited with peſtilentiall ſickeneſſe. *Hezekias* was a King, and his was a peſtilentiall ſickeneſſe; and many holy Divines of late, and other Chriſtians have beene ſwept away by the ſickeneſſe. *Iunius* and other rare men of excellent uſe in the Church. Therefore let us labour to get into the favour of God, make uſe of our renewing.

our covenant for the time to come (that is one end of faſting now, to renew our covenants, to remake them for the time to come) and then come what will and welcome, life or death: for there is a bleſſing hid in the moſt loathſome ſickeneſſe and death. If wee come to Heaven, it is no matter by what way: *Though the body be ſowen in diſhonour* (we may die of a noyſome diſeaſe, that we cannot have our friends neare us, yet) *the body ſhall riſe againe in honour.* What matter (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *If by any meanes I may come to the reſurrection of the dead,* by faire death, or foule death, it is no matter. And if ſo bee that God make not good his promiſe of particular protection of our bodies from contagion, *&c.* it is no matter: wee have a generall promiſe, *that he will be our God, he is the God of Abraham*; the God of the dead as well as of the living. He is a God that is everlaſting in the Covenant of grace, in life and death and for ever, if wee bee entered into the covenant of grace, it holds for ever. And when all other promiſes faile, and all things in the world faile, ſticke to the maine promiſe of forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and *life everlaſting:* When all things in the world will faile; wee muſt leave them ſhortly wealth and whatſoever, what a comfort is in that grand promiſe, that God will forgive us our ſinnes, and give us life everlaſting for Chriſt! Therefore when all things

things elſe are gone, let us wrap our ſelves in the gracious promiſes of Chriſt, and then wee ſhall live and dye with comfort.

* * *

FINIS

THE DEAD-MAN, OR, THE STATE OF EVERY Man by nature.

In one Sermon.

By the late Reverend and Learned Divine RICHARD SIBS,

Doctor in Divinity, Master of Katherine Hall in Cambridge, and sometimes Preacher at GRAYES INNE.

JOHN. 5.25.

Verily, verily I say unto you, the houre is comming and now is when the dead shall heare the voice of the Sonne of God, and they that heare shall live.



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MDCXXXIX.



THE DEAD-MAN.

EPHES. 2. 1.

And you hath bee quickned, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes.

THE matter of this excellent Epiſtle is, partly doctrinall, and partly exhortatory: as it was S. *Paules* courſe in all his Epiſtles, to lay the foundation of practiſe in doctrine. The heart muſt be mooved, but the braine muſt be inſtructed firſt: there is a ſimpathy betweene thoſe two parts, as in nature, ſo in grace. The doctrinall part of the Epiſtle ſets out the riches of Chriſt, (chiefly in the firſt Chapter) in regard of the ſpring of them, Gods eternall election.

The matter of the Epiſtle.

election. Then in this Chapter by way of comparison; by comparing the state of grace to the state of nature. *You hath hee quickned, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*

Dependance of the words.

The dependance of this Verse, I take it to be from the 19. Verse of the first Chapter. The Apostle there prayes that the *Ephesians* might have *the eye of their understandings opened and enlightned*, that they might know (among other things,) what the exceeding great power of God is towards us that beleeve, *According to the working of his mighty power that he wrought in Christ, when hee raised him from the dead:* that they might have experience of that mighty power that raised Christ from the dead. Now here in this Chapter he saith, *They were raised together with Christ, and set together with him in heavenly places.* His reason is in this manner. Those that are raised up and quickned with Christ to sit in heavenly places with him, have experience of a mighty power: But you are raised up and quickned with Christ to sit in heavenly places with him: therefore you have experience of a mighty power that raised Christ: for those that are raised and quickned with Christ have experience of that power that Christ had when he was raised up.

The second thing that he intends especially in this Chapter, is to shew that *being raised with Christ, they are brought nearer to God, both Iewes and Gentiles, that of themselves were farre off.*

Now

Now he ſhewes that they *were raiſed and quickned with Chriſt, and brought neare to God in Chriſt*, that they might magnifie *the free grace of God in Chriſt*; (all is by grace) and thereupon to be ſtirred up to a ſuteable, comfortable and gracious life. To come to the words, *And you hath he quickned*, &c. They are an application of the former comfortable truths to them, *you hath he quickned*, &c. Theſe words, *hath he quickned*, are not in the originall in this place: they are after in verſe 5. *When we were dead in ſinnes, he quickned us*: but they are put in, in the tranſlation; becauſe they muſt be underſtood to make the full ſence.

In the words conſider theſe things

Firſt of all, heere the Apoſtle puts them in mind of their former condition.

And then he ſets downe in particular what it was, *They were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*.

Then he tells them wherein they were dead, what was the cauſe of their death, and the element wherein they were dead, *in treſpaſſes and ſins*.

Laſtly, not in one treſpaſſe and in one ſin; but *in treſpaſſes and ſins*.

And then to ſpeake a little of *quickning*, to take it out of the 5. verſe. *You hath he quickned*. There is the benefit with the condition. That which I aime at is eſpecially to ſhew our eſtate by nature, and how we are raiſed out of that. I ſhall touch the points briefly as I have propounded them.

Saint

Hee minds them of their former condition.

Saint *Paul* here first minds them of their former condition, *you were dead in trespasses and sinnes:* For contraries give lustre one to another, and it magnifies grace mervailously to consider the opposite condition. Hee that never knew the *height and bredth and depth* of his naturall corruption, will never be able to conceive *the height and breadth and depth of Gods infinite love in Iesus Christ.* Saint *Paul* had deepe thoughts of both as ever man had; therefore he could never enter into the argument, of abasing man, and extolling the love of God in Christ, that he could satisfie himselfe: but his spirit carries him from one thing to another, till he set it out to the full. And every one of us should be skilfull in this double mystery, the mystery of the corruption of nature that is unsearchable, there is corruption in the heart that none knows but God only: and we must plow with his heifer that carries a light into the hidden parts of the soule, and discovers corruption: there is a mystery of that as well as of the Gospell, of our deliverance out of that cursed estate from the guilt and thraldome of it. I doe but touch it onely, to shew the scope of the Apostle.

Why we should consider our former condition.

Now besides the consideration of it for this end; to magnifie the grace of God, and to understand what our former estate was the better: there are many other ends. As to stirre up our thankefullnesse, when we consider from what we are delivered, to glorifie God the more.

There

There is no ſoule ſo enlarged to glorifie God as that ſoule that hath large thoughts of its eſtate by nature, and that eſtate by nature made worſe by cuſtome, our ſecond ill nature and bondage voluntary: conſidering Gods mercy in delivering and freeing us from all ſinnes and treſpaſſes, this will make us thankefull indeed. And it is a ſpring of love to God, when we conſider what great ſinnes we have forgiven us, it will make us humble all the daies of our lives, and pitifull to others: but this may be handled fitter from another portion of Scripture. To come therefore to the words.

Who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.

Their condition is, *they were dead*; the ſpecification of their death, *in ſinnes and treſpaſſes*, and not in one, but in ſinnes and treſpaſſes. Here I might digreſſe and tell you a diſcourſe of life and death at large: every man knowes by experience what they are. In a word death is a privation of life. What is life? and whence ariſeth it? Not to ſpeake of the life of God, (God is life and Chriſt is life) but of life in us. It ariſeth from the ſoule: firſt there is a ſoule; and then a life from the union with that ſoule; and then there is a ſecret kindled motion and operation outward, whereſoever life is. Life in man (I ſay) ſprings from the ſoule: The ſoule hath a double life, a life in it ſelfe, and a life it communicates to the body. The life in it

Man naturally dead.

Death what?

Life what?

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it ſelfe, it liveth when it is out of the body, it hath an eſſentiall life of its owne: but the life of the body is derived from its union with the ſoule, and from that union comes lively motion and operation. The ſpirituall life of the ſoule is by the Spirit of Chriſt, when our ſoule hath union with the quickning Spirit of Chriſt, and by Chriſts Spirit is joyned to Chriſt, and by Chriſt to God, who is life it ſelfe and the firſt fountaine of all life: then we have a ſpirituall life. The Spirit is the ſoule of our ſoules, and this ſpiritual ſoule, this Spirit in us is not idle wherever life is there is motion and operation inward and outward ſuteable and proportionable to the fountaine of life, the Spirit of God himſelfe.

Spirituall life whence?

So on the contrary it is with death; what is death? Death is nothing elſe but a ſeperation from the cauſe of life, from that from whence life ſprings. The body having a communicated life from the ſoule, when the ſoule is departed it muſt needs be dead. Now death (take it in a ſpirituall ſence) it is either the death of law our ſentence: as we ſay of a man when he is condemned, he is a dead man. Or death in regard of diſpoſition; and then the execution of that death of ſentence in bodily death, and in eternall death afterward. Now naturally we are dead in all theſe ſences.

Spiritual death

I.
In diſpoſition.

Firſt by the ſin of *Adam*, in whoſe loynes we were, we were all damned; there was a ſentence of death upon all *Adams* rotten race, as

as we say *damnati antequam nati*, we were damned before we were borne, as soone as we had a being in our mothers wombe, by reason of our communion with *Adam* in that first sinne.

And then there is corruption of nature as a punishment of that first sinne, that is a death (as we shall see afterward) a death of al the powers, we cannot act and moove according to that life that we had at the first; we cannot thinke, we cannot will, we cannot affect, we cannot doe any thing that savours of spirituall life.

2. *Sentence.*

Hereupon comes a death of sentence upon us, being damned both in *Adams* loynes and in originall sinne, and likewise adding actuall sinnes of our owne: if we had no actuall sinne it were enough for the sentence of death to passe upon us, but this aggravates the sentence. We are dead in law as well as in disposition. This death in law is called guilt, a binding over to eternall death: it breeds horrour and terrours in the soule for the present, which are the flashes of Hell-fire, and expectation of worse (even of the second death) for the time to come, which is an eternall seperation from God for ever, an eternall lying under the wrath and curse of God in body and soule (after they are united at the resurrection) because wee would sinne eternally if we did live eternally here: and no satisfaction being made for man after death, there must be an eternall sentence and punishment upon him, a terrible condition: if we were not afraid of the first death we should

3. *Execution.*

be afraid of the ſecond death that followes, *yet are all dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.*

Now what is the reaſon of it why we are dead?

Firſt of all, the ground of it is; by ſin we are ſeperated from the fountaine of life, therfore we are all dead.

Secondly, by ſinne we loſt that firſt originall righteouſneſſe which was comproduced with *Adams* ſoule: when *Adams* ſoule was infuſed, it was cloathed with all graces, with originall righteouſneſſe: the ſtampe of God was on his ſoule, it was connaturall to that eſtate and condition, to have that excellent gratious diſpoſition that he had. Now becauſe we all loſt that primative Image and glory of our ſoules we are dead.

We are dead likewiſe not onely in regard of the time paſt, but for the time to come: No man by nature hath fellowſhip with the ſecond *Adam*, till he be grafted into him by Faith, which is a meere ſupernaturall thing. In theſe regards every man naturally is dead.

Sinne it ſelfe a death.

Nay ſinne it ſelfe, it is not onely a cauſe of death, of temporall death, as it is a curſe; and ſo of eternall death: of that bitter ſentence, and adjudging of us to, both that we feele in terrours of conſcience, and expect after. But ſinne it ſelfe is an intrinſicall death: Why? Becauſe it is nothing but a ſeperation of the ſoule from the chiefe good, (which is God) and a cleaving to ſome creature. For there is

no

no ſin but it carries the ſoule to the changeable creature, in delight, and affection to its pride, and vanity, one thing or other. Sinne is a turning from God to the creature, and that very turning of the ſoule is death, every ſinfull ſoule is dead. In theſe and the like conſiderations, you may conceave we are all dead.

And you hath hee quickned, who were dead, &c.

Let us conſider a little what a condition this is, to be dead in treſpaſſes and ſinnes. Not to ſpeake of the danger of the death of ſentence, when a man by the ſtate of nature lies under the wrath of God, that hanges over his head, and is ready to cruſh him every moment. But to ſpeake of that death that ſeizeth upon our diſpoſitions, wee are dead by nature. And what doth death worke upon the body? unactiveneſſe, ſtiffneſſe; ſo when the Spirit of God is ſevered from the ſoule, it is cold, and unactive, and ſtiffe. Therefore thoſe that finde no life to that that is good, no nor no power nor ſtrength; it is a ſigne that they have not yet felt the power of the quickning Spirit, when they heare coldly, and receive the Sacrament coldly, as if it were a dead piece of worke and buſineſſe; when they doe any thing that is ſpiritually good coldly, and forced; not from an inward principle of love to God (that might heate and warme their hearts:) but they goe about it as a thing that muſt be done,

Signes of ſpirituall death.

1, *Coldneſſe.*

and thinke to satisfie God with an outward dead action.

2. Unloveliness. Againe, death makes the body unlovely, *Abraham* would buy a piece of ground *that hee might bury his dead out of his sight*, hee could not indure the sight of his owne beloved wife when shee was dead. Death takes away the beauty and the honour that God hath put upon the body, so that it is not honourable to those that behold it after death. The Image of God stamped upon the soule of man by the Spirit, it is the glory of a man: after sin it is an unlovely soule. *We are all deprived of the glory of God*, as S. *Paul* saith.

3. Loathsomenes. And not onely so; but there is a loathsomenesse contrary to that honour that was in it before. Though all art and skill be used that may be to set out a dead body, (with flowers, or whatsoever you will) to please the fancy of the living: yet it is but a dead body, and the stench will be above all other sweete smells. So let any naturall man be as witty, and as learned, and as great, and as rich as you will; or as he can be set out with all these ornaments and flowers: yet hee is but a carrion, a loathsome creature to God, if his soule be seperated from God, and inwardly cleave to the creature. If he have not a new heart, he is abhominable and loathsome to God, and to all that have the Spirit of God. A dead soule is abhominable to all Gods sences, (the Scripture thus familiarly condescends unto us,) hee will

will not behold him, *hee lookes upon the proud afarre off*. And hee ſmells no ſavour from their performances, *the very ſacrifice of the wicked is abhominable*, he lookes upon them as wee doe upon a dunghill, as a loathſome thing. *The prayers of the wicked are an abhomination to God*, he turnes away his face from them, hee cannot indure them. And for his eares, *hee will not heare the prayers of the wicked*. And for feeling, he is wearied with their ſinnes, *as a cart is with ſheaves*. Nay, he is wearied with their very good actions, as it is *Iſa.* 1. 8. Whatſoever wicked men performe it is abhominable to God, hee cannot behold them, hee cannot indure them, hee is burdened with their ſinnes; and thoſe alſo that have the Spirit of God in them, as farre as they ſee the foulenеſſe of their ſins they loath them.

But herein a wicked man agrees with a dead body, a dead body is not loathſome to its ſelfe. So take a carnall man, hee pranks up himſelfe, hee thinkes himſelfe a jolly man, eſpecially when hee is ſet out in his flowers, thoſe things that hee beggs of the creatures, he ſees not his loathſomeneſſe; hee thinkes himſelfe a brave man in the world, in the place he lives in: and hee hath baſe conceits of others, of God, and all things of God. Dead men are not loathſome to themſelves, becauſe they want ſences. As in a priſon, the noiſome ſavour is not offenſive to them, becauſe they are all acquainted with it; it hath ceazed upon and poſſeſſed their

ſences: So wicked men they ſmell no ill ſavour and ſent one from another: becauſe they are all dead perſons, one dead man is not loathſome to another: as a company of priſoners they are not offended with the noyſomeneſſe of one another.

4. *They are ſeperate from God and Gods people.*

Againe, we ſever dead perſons from the reſt: ſo indeed a dead ſoule as he is ſevered from God, ſo *de jure*, he ſhould be ſevered from the company of others: there ſhould be a ſeperation, and as ſoone as the life of grace is begun, there will be a ſeperation betweene the living and the dead. *Let the dead follow the dead, and bury the dead*, ſaith our Saviour in the Goſpell.

5. *Senceleſneſſe.*

Without ſpeech

Where bodily death is, it deprives of all ſences, there is no uſe of any, either of the eye or tongue, *&c.* it makes them ſpeechleſſe: So he that is ſpiritually a dead man, he can ſpeake nothing that is ſavoury and good of ſpirituall things, if he doth he is out of his element, if he ſpeak of good things he ſpeakes with the ſpirit of another man; if he ſpeake of the writings of other men, it is with the ſpirit of the writer. He cannot ſpeake to God in praiſe, or to others in experience of the worke of grace, becauſe he hath a dead ſoule. Put him to his owne arguments, to talke of vanity, to ſweare or to talke of the times, you ſhall have him in his theame: but to talke of God and divine things (unleſſe it be to ſweare by them and to ſcorne good things) he cannot; he is ſpeechleſſe

lesse there, it is not his theame. And as he is speechlesse so he hath no spirituall eyes to see God in his works. There is nothing that we see with our bodily eyes, but our soules should have an eye to see somewhat of God in it, his mercy and goodnesse and power, &c. And so he hath no relish to taste of God in his creatures and mercies: when a man tasts of the creatures he should have a spirituall taste of God and of the mercy in him, Oh how sweet is God! A wicked man hath no taste of God. And he cannot heare what the Spirit saith in the Word, he heares the voice of man, but not of the Spirit when the trumpet of the Word sounds never so loud in his eares. These things ought not to be overmuch pressed, much curiosity must not be used in them, but because the Holy Ghost raiseth the proportion from these things, some thing must be said of them.

Without sight.

Without taste.

Without hearing.

As there is no sence nor mooving to outward things, so no outward thing can moove a dead body: offer him colours to the eye, food to the taste, or any thing to the feeeling, nothing mooves him: So a dead soule, as it cannot moove to good, so it is mooved with nothing, that that affects a child of God, and makes him tremble and quake, it affects not a carnall man at all.

6. *Immooveable.*

And as in bodily death, the longer it is dead, the more noysome and offensive it is every day more then other: So sinne it makes the soule more loathsome and noysome daily, till they

7. *Growes worse.*

have filled up the measure of their sinnes, till the earth can beare them no longer. We say of a dead body it is heavy: so dead soules I am sure they are heavy, heavy to God and to Christ that dyed for sinne, and heavy in themselves, they sinke to earthly things in their affections, and thereby they sinke lower and lower to Hell, and never leave sinking till they be there. As the life of grace is like the Sunne when it riseth, it growes still till it come to full perfection, till it come to the life of glory: So on the contrary this death is a death that is more and more increased in the loathsomenesse and noysomenesse of it every way: so that the longer a carnall man lives the more guilt hee contracts, *A child of a hundred yeares old* (as the Prophet saith) the longer he lives the more vengeance is stored for him; *he treasures vengeance up against the day of vengeance*, and it is a curse for a man in his naturall estate to live long, for he growes more and more abhominable every way. These things helpe to understand the Scripture, and therefore so far we may well thinke of them.

To know what we are by nature.

If this be so, I beseech you let us learne to know what we are by nature; not to make our selves in our owne conceits better then indeed wee are. We judge of our selves as we are to civill things. A man that hath naturall parts, that can discourse and understand the mysteries of law and of the state, we value men by these. Alas poore soule thou mayest be dead for all this

this; what are all these abilities for? Are they not for the spirituall life? What is this to the life of grace? They onely blow thee up with pride and set thee further off, and make thee uncapable of grace. If thou talke of learning; the Divell is a better scholler then any man, he knowes matters of state and other things better then thou doest, and yet he is a Divell for all that, therefore never stand upon these things. But there is a company that are more to blame then these; one would thinke that these have something to be proud off, that they might set themselves against God and goodnes: but there is a generation that have little in them, that yet think themselves the only men in loose licentious life, despising all, caring for none, & think it the only life to live as they list, to goe where they list, in what companies they list, to have bounds of their owne: these think themselves the onely men, when indeed they are no body; they are dead loathsome creatures; (it is the mercy of God that the ground doth not sinke under them;) and yet they carry themselves, as if they only were alive.

To avoid intimate society with carnall men.

Againe if we be all dead by nature, and there ought to be a separation of the living from the dead; let us take heed in our amity and society that we converse not with naturall men too much, that have not spirituall goodnesse in them; that we converse not with them with delight and complacency. It is a tyrannicall thing to knit dead and living bodies together,

and

and he was accounted a tyrant that did so: surely in choosing our society, conjugall or friendly, any intimate society to joyne living and dead soules together, we are tyrants to our owne soules. Wee wrong our soules to joyne with dead persons, who would converse with dead courses, and corps? The very creatures startle at the sight of a dead body; nature startles at that that is dead. If wee had the life of grace (further then the necessity of civill conversation, and the hope of bettering them forceth it upon us) wee would have no society with those that we see are in the state of nature. What issues from them but stench? eyes full of adultery, nothing that is pleasing can come from them; nothing can come from all their sences but rottennesse, and stench; what comfort can a man (that loves his owne soule, and hath any desire to be saved) have by intimate converse with such persons? let them have never so good parts, they hurt more one way then they doe good another: you see wee are all dead by nature, and what this death is.

Object.

But you will say there is a difference betweene naturall death, and spirituall death: for in naturall bodily death, there is no mooving; but in this spirituall death of the soule, men have sences, and motion, *&c.*

Answ. *Difference in naturall and spirituall death.*

It is true, thus farre they differ; though a man be spiritually dead, yet notwithstanding he hath feete to carry him to the house of God;

he

he hath eares to heare the Word of God; he hath abilities of nature upon which grace is founded. God workes grace upon nature. Now a man living in the Church of God, that is a grace when a man hath grace to live within the compasse of the meanes: he can by common grace, without any inward change of nature, come and heare the Word of God, and when he is there he may yeeld an eare to listen, and he hath common discourse and understanding to know what is said and upon what ground, he can offer himselfe to the worke of the Spirit; he can come to the poole (though he be not thrust in this day, or that day) when God stirrs the waters: this by common grace, any man living in the Church may doe.

To use the naturall parts God hath given us.

Therefore though we be all dead, even the best of us by nature: yet let us use the parts of nature that we have, that God hath given us, to offer our selves to the gracions and blessed meanes wherein the Spirit of God may worke. Let us come to heare the Word of God, *Iohn* 5.25. *The time is come and now is that the dead shall heare the voice of God*, where the voice of God is in the Ministery, *and so they shall live.* As in the latter day the noyse of the trumpet shall raise the dead bodies: So the trumpet of the Word of God sounding in the eares of men (together with the Spirit) shall raise the dead soules out of the grave of sin. Therefore I beseech you as you would be raised up out

out of this death, heare the noyse of Gods trumpet come within the compasse of the meanes. As God is the God of life, and Christ calls himselfe *the life and the Spirit, the Spirit of life:* So the Word is *the Word of life*, because together with the Word God conveyes spirituall life. The Word of God in the Ordinance is an operative working Word. As it was in the creation, God said, *Let there bee light and there was light:* So in the Ministery it exhorts and stirres up to duty, and there is a cloathing of the ministeriall word with an almighty power, it is a working word. As when Christ spake to *Lazarus*, when hee stanke in his grave, he said *Lazarus come foorth*, it was an operative working word, there went an almighty power to raise *Lazarus*. Therefore though we finde our selves dead and have no worke of grace: yet let us present our selves more and more to the Ordinance of God. God will be mighty in his own Ordinance: the blessed time may come, let us waite when the waters are stirred, and take heede that we despise not the counsell of God, which is to bring man to spirituall life this way.

God can raise old sinners.

And object not I am dead and rotten in sin many yeares, I am an old man.

You know many were raised in the Gospell, some that had beene dead few daies: *Lazarus was rotten and stanke.* It shewes us that though a man be dead and rotten in sinne, yet he may be raised first or last, the blessed time may come

come, therefore waite; never pretend long cuſtome, and long living in ſinne, All things are in obedience to God, though they have a reſiſtance in themſelves, yet God can take away that reſiſtance and bring all to obey him. All things in the world though they be never ſo oppoſite to Gods grace, they are in obedience to his command. Therefore though there be nothing but actuall preſent reſiſtance in the ſoule to that that is good and a ſlavery to the bondage of ſin: yet attend meekly upon the Ordinance, God can make of Lions Lambs, he can take away that actual reſiſtance. As Chriſt when he was raiſed, the ſtone that lay upon the grave was remooved: So when God will quicken a man, he will remoove the ſtone of long cuſtome that is upon him; though he have beene dead ſo many yeares, yet God can rowle away the ſtone and bid him riſe up. Therefore let none deſpaire, God is more mercifull to ſave thoſe that belong to him, then Sathan can be malicious to hinder any way.

The beſt men have ſome remainders of death.

The beſt of us all, though we be not wholly dead, yet there are ſome relicks of ſpirituall death hanging upon us, there be corruptions which in themſelves are noyſome. Therefore let all attend upon the meanes, that the Spirit of God by little and little may worke out the remainders of death; the remainders of darkneſſe in our underſtandings, and of rebellion in our wills and affections. For there bee uſually

Three degrees of men in the Church.

ally three degrees of persons in the Church of God. Some open rotten persons that are as graves, open sepulchres, that their stincke comes foorth and they are prophane ones. There are some that have a forme of godlinesse that are meerely ghosts, that act things outwardly but they have not a spirit of their owne; they have an evill spirit and yet doe good workes: they walke up and downe and doe things with no spirit of their owne. The second are more tollerable then the first in humane society; because the other stinke and smell to common society: common swearers and prophane persons that stinke to any except it be to themselves. But the godly have this death in part; the life of sentence is perfect, the life of justification: but spirituall life in us is by little and little wrought in the meanes, the Spirit of life joynes with the Word of life and quickens us daily more and more. A word of these words

And you hath he quickned.

* *Easter-day.*

Suteable to the * occasion. This being our estate, let us know how much we are beholding to God *who hath quickned us*. God quickens us with Christ and in Christ. It is a comfortable consideration. In that God hath quickned Christ and raised him from the grave, it shewes that his Fathers wrath is pacified, or else he would not have quickned him, he gave him

him to death, and quickned him againe, therefore we may know that he hath paid the price for us. And he quickens us with Christ and in Christ, whatsoever we have that is good it is in Christ first, *That Christ in all things might have the preheminence.* Christ first rose and ascended and sits in Heaven, and then we rise and ascend *and sit in heavenly places with Christ,* * Therefore as S^t. *Peter* saith well, in 1. *Peter* 1. 20. *God hath raised Christ, that our faith might bee in God.* If Christ had not beene raised up, our Faith and Hope could not have beene in God, that he would raise us up, we are quickned and raised in Christ, all is in Christ first, and then in us. The ground of this is, that Christ was a publike person in all that he did, in his death, therefore we are crucified and buried with him; in his resurrection and ascention, therefore we are quickned with him *and sit in heavenly places with him.* He is the second *Adam*; And if the first *Adam* could convey death to so many thousands, so many thousand yeeres after; and if the worl d should continue millions of yeares, he would convey death to all: shall not Christ the second *Adam* convey life to all that are in him. So thinke of all things both comfortable and uncomfortable in Christ first, when we thinke of sinne, thinke of it in him our Surety and when we thinke of freedome from death and damnation; thinke of his death, when wee thinke of our resurrection, thinke of his, when he rose againe; in his resurrection the acquittance

* *See the Sermons upon* Rom. 8. 2.

tance from our ſinnes was ſealed: thereby we know that the debt is paid, becauſe he roſe againe, let us ſee an acquittance of all in the reſurrection. And if we thinke of the glory that God hath reſerved for us, thinke of it in Chriſt, ſee Chriſt glorious firſt, and we in him. See Chriſt at the right hand of God, and wee in him, carry Chriſt along with us in our contemplations. We are quickned with Chriſt, Chriſt takes away all the deaths I ſpake of before. Chriſt by his reſurrection tooke away the death of ſentence, *he roſe againe for our juſtification, ſo that now there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt.* So againe in regard of that deadly diſpoſition that is in us, Chriſt quickens us in regard of that, by infuſing grace by his Spirit: for Chriſt is an univerſall principle of all life: Now Chriſt by his death pacifying his Father obteined the Spirit, and by that Spirit which he infuſeth as a principle of life, he more and more quickens our nature and makes it better and better till it be perfect in Heaven. As *Adam* was a principle of death, and the more we live in the ſtate of nature, the worſe we are, til we come to hel: So when we are in Chriſt, the Spirit ſanctifies us more and more till he have brought us to perfection. And as we are quickned from the death of ſentence and of diſpoſition, ſo we are quickned in regard of that hope of glory that we have: For now in Chriſt we are in Heaven already, and though there come bodily death betweene, yet notwithſtanding

withstanding that is but a fitting us for glory, the body is but fitted and molded in the grave for glory. This very consideration will quicken a man in death, my head is in Heaven above water, therefore the body shall not bee long under water. And Faith makes that that is to come present, and affects the soule comfortably. Christ is in Heaven already, and I am there in Christ, and I shall be there as verily as he is there; I am there *de jure, & de facto* I shall be there; in these considerations Christ quickens us: Therefore saith S^t. *Peter, Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ who hath begotten us againe through the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to a lively hope of an inheritance immortall*, &c. We are begotten againe to this inheritance by the resurrection of Christ, who is risen againe to quicken himselfe and all his. The consideration of this should affect us as it did Saint *Peter, to blesse God.*

Now all this quickning power ariseth from our union with Christ, we must have a beeing in Christ before we can have comfort by death with him, or by rising with him. Our union with Christ springs from faith: faith is cherished by the Sacrament: the Word and Sacrament beget faith: faith unites us to Christ: union with Christ makes us partake of his death, and the benefits of it, and of his resurrection and ascention to glory: therefore the more we attend upon this ordinance of the Word, and

the ſeale of the Word, the Sacrament, the more our faith is increaſed: for God invites us to communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt, and all his benefits and favours: and the more wee find faith aſſured of Chriſt, the more union and fellowſhip wee have with Chriſt, and the more wee ſeele that, the more Chriſt is a quickning Spirit: quickning us with the life of grace here, and the hope of Glory afterward. Therefore let us comfortably attend upon the ordinance of God ſanctified for this purpoſe, to ſtrengthen this our union with Chriſt.

* * *

FINIS.

THE FRVITFVLL LABOVR FOR Eternall Foode.

In two Sermons,

By the late Reverend and Learned Divine RICHARD SIBS,

Doctor in Divinity, Master of Katherine Hall in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher at *Grayes-Inne*.

ESAY. 55.2.

Why doe you spend money for that which is not Bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto mee, and eate yee that which is good, and let your soule delight it selfe in fatnesse.

JOHN 6.55.

For my flesh is meate indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

LONDON,
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THE FRUITFUL LABOUR OF Eternall Foode.

THE FRVITFVLL LABOVR FOR Eternall Food.

IOHN 6. 27.

Labour not for the meate that perisheth, but for the meate that indureth to everlasting life, which the Sonne of man shall give you, for him hath God the Father Sealed.

OVr blessed Saviour was mighty in word and deed, witnesse what he did, what he taught, and both in this Chapter.

What he did, hee fed many with a few loaves, he came over the water without any helpe.

What he taught, witnesse from this part of the Chapter to the end.

The words are part of an Answer of our blessed Saviour to his hypocriticall followers, that followed him for the Loaves, and not for any confirmation of their faith by his miracles: for upon occasion of those two miracles (mentioned in the former part of the Chapter) they followed him, and perceiving that hee was miraculously come over the water, they began to aske him, *Rabbi, how camest thou heere?* Our Saviour perceives that they meant to complement with him, he sees with what hearts they came after him, therefore as most befitting the Exigence of their state, because they were hypocrites, he answers, not to their question, but to their persons, *Verily, verily, yee seeke mee not because of the miracles, but because yee eate of the loaves and were filled. Labour not for the meate that perisheth*, &c.

The Verses together containe a Conviction, and an Injunction, or direction.

A Conviction, and that is serious, and loving. Serious, *Verily, verily I say unto you, you seeke mee not because of the miracles, but because yee eate of the loaves*, &c. Hee convinceth them of their fault, of their hypocrisie, of their wicked and carnall aimes in holy businesse, they come flattering of Christ, but as hee was too holy to flatter, so he was too wise to be flattered, hee deales therefore directly with them, thoroughly convinceth them of their hypocrisie and corrupt aimes in following after him. We are all naturally prone to these carnall ends in holy actions;

actions; we must take heed with what mindes, with what hearts we come before God, whose eyes are brighter then the Sun, who regards not so much what we doe, as with what mindes we doe it.

As his conviction is Serious, so it is Loving, for with the conviction or reproofe followes the injunction or direction, *Labour not for the meate that perisheth.*

In the Injunction there are two things.

First, he shewes them what they should not follow, he takes them off from labouring after *the meate that perisheth.*

And then secondly, hee instructs them in what they should follow, what they should seeke after, *But labour for the meate that indureth to everlasting life,* &c.

There are Arguments in both. In the first, there is an Argument disswasive, and that is infolded, *Labour not for the meate that perisheth,* because it is meate that perisheth.

In the second, there are Arguments prersswasive, or inforcing to the duty, and they are three,

The necessity.
The excellencie.
The possibility of attaining.

The necessity, it is *meate,* and what so necessary as meate?

The excellency, and that is set forth, first by the continuance, it is *meate that endures.* Secondly, by the fruit or effect of it, it is *meate that*

endures to everlasting life, it is meate to life, and it is meate that tends to an everlasting, to a glorious life.

The possibility of attaining it, *The Sonne of man shall give it you, for him hath the Father Sealed.*

There are three things that must concurre to make a thing attaineable, and to be had,

A willingnesse in the giver.

Power and strength to give it.

And then Authority with power.

Heere are all these; heere is will to bestow it, he will give it, what freer then a gift? the Sonne of God became the Sonne of man upon purpose to give it, hee will give it, and he will give it freely.

Heere is power and strength to give it, for he is the Sonne of God as well as the Sonne of man.

And then heere is Authority joyned with that power, for *the Father hath Sealed him.* The Father that created Heaven and Earth, that hath all power in his hands, that is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, *He hath Sealed him*, Hee hath given him full Commission to bee the Saviour of all that trust in him, Christ came not without Authority from God the Father, hee came out with Gods broad Seale as his Commission.

So you see the Arguments, both disswasive, *Labour not for the meate that perisheth*, and perswasive, *But for the meate that endureth to everlasting*

laſting life. I ſhall but touch the former, and principally inſiſt upon the latter Branch.

To ſpeake a little for the explication of the words. What is heere meant by the *meate that periſheth?*

We muſt enlarge the ſenſe according to our Saviours meaning; By *the meate that periſheth*, hee doth not intend onely outward food, but all outward things whatſoever, they are the *meate that periſheth*, all earthly and outward things are the foode that the ſoule of a naturall man feedes upon. The ſoule of a Covetous man feeds upon his money, applauding himſelfe that he is worth ſo much and ſo much. The Ambitious man *Camelion* like feeds upon the ayre, upon the ayrie applauſe of the people. The Senſuall man feeds upon baſe and ſenſuall pleaſures, in a word, all carnall men, naturall men are condemned to that ſentence of the Serpent, *to eate duſt*, to feede upon outward, earthly, periſhing things. So that every thing that is not grace and glory or the meanes that leade to it, is a periſhing thing.

Nay (to raiſe it a little higher) Learning and Knowledge, if it be onely of periſhing things, is food that periſheth, for as the frame of nature and the civill frame of the world muſt have an end and periſh, ſo the knowledge of naturall and civill things muſt needs be periſhing alſo.

And to ſay no more, the very knowledge, the ſpeculative and contemplative knowledge of religious things, if we have onely the knowledge

ledge of the things in us and are not turned into the things we know, is a perishing thing. The truthes of God indeed are the food of the soule, but unlesse the goodnesse of those truths be the food of the will and affections, unlesse we are molded and fashioned into the very forme of those truthes, unlesse we are framed to a love and liking of that which we know, that those truths be rooted and planted in us, it is food that perisheth.

In a religious discourse, in preaching, all your ornaments, besides that which quickneth and strengtheneth the soule to holy duties, is food that perisheth. And your hearing, if it be only to heare wittie sentences and turnings of speech without regard to the truth it selfe, is food that perisheth. Thus you see what a great latitude this food that perisheth hath in Christs meaning.

Now our blessed Saviour takes them off from labouring for this by a strong Argument: Would you have a greater argument? *It is food that perisheth*, we doe not regard the lustre of things, but their continuance. Why do we esteeme of Chrystall more then glasse? Because it continues: Flowers have a goodly glosse, but wee regard them little, because they are fresh in the morning and cast away at evening. And so it is with all excellencies, unlesse it be grace or glory. All flesh is grasse, and the excellentest things of nature, wit and honour and learning and all, though they be not as grasse

so

so common, yet they are as *the flower of the grasse, they are all fading and withering, but the Word of God endureth for ever*, that is, the grace and comfort that we get by the blessed truthes of God, *that endures for ever*, and it makes us endure for ever, but all other things are food that perisheth, and we perish in the use of them, *The world passeth away and the concupiscence of it*, the world, the things lusted after perish, and in lusting after the world the lust perisheth, and we perish to in the pursute of them, nay which is worse, the immoderate seeking after these things destroy us, wee eternally perish, for by placing our affections on earthly things we turne earthly. Therefore in Divinity wee have our denomination from our affections, we are called good or ill not from our knowledge but from our affections. The Divell knowes good, but he is not good, it is loving and joying and delighting in good or ill that makes us good or ill, we have our forme and being in religion from our affections.

Now by seeking after and placing our affections that are ordained to close with better things, which shall make us happy in another world, by planting them on earthly things we become like the things earthly, by placing them on the world we become the world, we become earthly, therefore they are not onely perishing in themselves, but we perish in the pursute of them. It is a strong argument that is here used, all earthly things are food that perisheth

riſheth; for alas he that is rich to day may bee poore to morrow, he may be as rich as *Iob* in the morning, and as poore as *Iob* at night, hee may be in credit now with *Haman*, and bee in diſcredit ere ſoone, he may be in health now, and ſicke ere long; we need not Scripture for this, experience reads us this lecture enough, but we are ſo deſperately ſet on earthly things, that neither Faith, nor experience, nor the ſtrength of diſcourſe, nor reaſon is ſufficient to take us off till God by his Spirit convince us throughly of this, therefore *Moſes* prayes *that God would teach them to number their daies*, ſo though there is a ſufficient argument in the diſcovery of theſe earthly things to be periſhing things to inforce a diſſwaſion, yet we cannot looſen our affections to them, nor know the uncertainty of them till God teach us.

To make ſome uſe of this, in a word, and ſo to goe on to that which J more intend. If all things here below be graſſe and as the flower of the graſſe, periſhing and fading things, why then we ſhould take heede that we doe not redeeme any periſhing thing with the loſſe of that which doth not periſh, with the loſſe of this ſoule of ours, which is an eternall ſpirituall ſubſtance, breathed in by God in the creation, and redeemed by Chriſt, which is capable of immortality, capable of happineſſe, capable of the bleſſed impreſſion of the Image of God, *What if one ſhould gaine the whole world* (ſaith Chriſt that knowes the price of a ſoule beſt)

and

and ſhould looſe his owne ſoule. It is an argument ſufficient even to a man that is led but with the ſtrength of naturall reaſon, not to labour for that which will periſh, when he hath a ſoule that will not periſh; to labour after that thing as his maine chiefe good, that is of ſhorter continuance then himſelfe is extreamity of folly: therefore no carnall man that ſeeks after theſe periſhing things can ever be a wiſe man, becauſe he hath an end inferiour to himſelfe, hee may be wiſe for particular ends, to be rich, to have great places, to get his pleaſure, this is to be wiſe for particular ends; but he cannot be wiſe for the chiefe and laſt and beſt end, for his ſoule, for eternity, hee cannot direct his courſe that way, that labours for the food that periſheth.

And againe, we ſhould not paſſe to neglect any earthly thing to gaine advantage to our ſoules, becauſe they are periſhing things, wee ſhould force our ſelves to contentment in the loſſe of earthly things for the gaine of ſpirituall; the loſſe of things periſhing is an eaſie matter, we looſe things that will periſh whether we looſe them or no; All earthly things periſh either in our time or after us; we ſhould not therefore be over eager in getting of theſe earthly things, let us leave things that periſh to men that periſh: you ſee therefore how ſtrong a reaſon our Saviour Chriſt alleadgeth here, *Labour not for the meate that periſheth, becauſe it periſheth.*

And

And learne heere from our blessed Saviour a point of heavenly wisedome, you see when hee would take us off and dissuade us from the pursuit of earthly things, he takes an argument from the nature of them, they are perishing things, and therefore when wee looke upon the outward luster of earthly things, wee should withall consider the perishing nature of them; when we are tempted to too much delight in the creature, we should present to our selves the perishing and fading nature of outward things; when wee are tempted to sinne either to commit, or to leave that which is good for any thing that is outward, we should consider, what doe I now, I staine my soule, I crack my conscience, I contract guilt and grounds of terror for the time to come, for that which is perishing: it is alwaies good to have present to our soules and to our fancies the nature of earthly things, that they may be as present as the temptation, that Satan from them urgeth and forceth upon the soule; it is good alwaies to remember that they are perishing things, and that as they are perishing in themselves, so they will destroy us, cause us to perish in the pursuite of them. But my meaning is not to dwell long upon this.

Labour not for the meate that perisheth.

What? doth Christ meane that wee should not labour at all for earthly things? doth hee reade

reade a Lecture of ill husbandry and unthriftineſſe and negligence?

No, he doth as we doe, when we would ſet a crooked thing ſtraight we bend it as much the contrary way, our Saviour ſaw that they were deſperately addicted to earthly things, that they followed him for their bellies, ſought him for the loaves, therefore hee bends the ſticke the contrary way, *Labour not for the meate that periſheth*, that is, labour not for it in compariſon of better things, labour not ſo inordinately, ſo immoderately, labour not ſo unſeaſonably. It is ſaid of the *Iſraelites* that they brought Ægypt into the Wilderneſſe, becauſe they brought the love of the Garlicke and Onyons of Ægypt with them: wee have many come to the Church, to theſe holy exerciſes, to this holy place, but they bring the world with them, they come with carnall affections: labour not ſo unſeaſonably; it ſhould be our heavenly wiſdome to lay aſide importunate earthly thoughts of earthly things, to drive them away as *Abraham* did the Birds from the Sacrifice, we ſhould leave them as he did the Beaſts and his Servants at the bottome of the Mount when hee went up to ſacrifice unto God: thus labour not, labour not immoderately, labour not inordinately, labour not unſeaſonably.

But how ſhall wee know when our labour is immoderate, unſeaſonable, and inordinate after earthly things?

I anſwer (in a word) when they either hinder

us

us from, or hinder us in holy things, when they keepe us from holy duties, as from the sanctifying of the Lords day, or from any other service of God, or when they hinder us in them, when they fill us full of distractions, when they turne the soule from the businesse in hand, &c. thus when they doe either hinder us from or hinder us in better things, we may know wee offend against this disswasion of Christ, *Labour not for the meate that perisheth.*

But why doth our Saviour begin first with his disswasion, *Labour not for the meate that perisheth*, and then injoyne what they should seeke after, but *for the meate that endureth to everlasting life?*

Because he saw that their soules were corrupted and desperately set upon the seeking after earthly things, and when the soule is invested to any thing, there must first be a remoovall of that; as in ground, the thornes must first bee rooted out, before there bee any sowing of seed, and in bodily distempers, there must first bee a purge of the malignant humour, before there be any Cordialls given; so Christ, he first takes them off from an immoderate and inordinate seeking after the world and earthly things, and then he directs them what they should do, what they should seeke after, seeke the foode that endures to everlasting life.

Heere is the prerogative of Christianity, a Heathen man out of the strength of morrall discourse and outward experience can teach the negative

negative part, can tell you that all earthly things are vaine and periſhing. A Stoick will declaime wittily and gravely from morrall principels and daily experience upon theſe things, that theſe earthly things of themſelves are all vaine and fading, and that it is our conceit of them onely that bewitcheth us to them, it is that onely that renders them to us greene and freſh: But now for the affirmative part, what we ſhould ſeeke after, heere Paganiſme is blinde, that is onely to bee learned in the Church of Chriſt, it is proper to Chriſtianity to direct us heere, as I ſhall diſcover better to you when I come to ſpeake of the duty injoyned, which is that I eſpecially aime at.

But before I come to inforce the act or duty which our Saviour heere exhorts unto, I muſt unfold the object of that act, what is meant heere by the *meate that endures to everlaſting life.*

The *meate that endures to everlaſting life* is our bleſſed Saviour Chriſt Jeſus, as he is contained and wrapped up in the meanes of ſalvation, with all the bleſſed liberties, priviledges, and prerogatives, graces and comforts that we have by him and in him: for our bleſſed Saviour never goes alone, hee is never imbraced naked, but with him goes his graces, comforts, prerogatives and liberties; wee have him not now as we ſhall ſee him face to face hereafter in Heaven, but he is to be conſidered as wrapped up in the Word and Sacraments, ſo is

Christ the foode that lasts to everlasting life, and in this latitude we must take it, or else wee mistake and straiten the Holy Ghost.

But why is our blessed Saviour so considered, and the comforts, and prerogatives, and good things we have by him termed food?

In divers respects. To instance in a few: but first, you must know that as the soule hath a life as well as the body, so it hath a taste as well as the body, and as God (least the body should pine away) hath planted in it an appetite, which is the bodies longing after that which refresheth it, for if it were not for appetite, if it were not for hunger and thirst who would care for meate and drinke; so God hath planted in the soule, (least it should pine away) a spirituall appetite, an earnest longing and desiring after that which is the most necessary good of the soule; for the soule hath that which the body hath, taste, and smell, *&c.* though in a more sublime and divine sense, but as really and truly, as we shall see afterwards. Now our blessed Saviour is this spirituall food of the soule, He is the bread of life that came downe from Heaven, He is the true Manna, He is the true Tree of life in Paradice, in the Church of God the true Paradice, He is the true Shewbread, He is the true Lambe of God, He, considered with all the blessed prerogatives and priviledges and comforts we have by him, is called meate or food for divers respects.

First, whatsoever sweetnesse, or comfort, or strength

ſtrength there is in meate, it is for the comfort and ſtrength and good of the body; ſo whatſoever is comfortable and cheriſhing in Chriſt (as indeed all comfort and cheriſhing is in him) it is for our good; to us He is given, for us Hee was borne, *to us a Childe is borne, to us a Sonne is given*, all is for us, for us men, for us ſinners; there is nothing in his natures, in his ſtate and condition both of abaſement and exaltation, nothing in his Offices but it is all for our good. Conſider him in his humane nature, and joyne with his nature, his abaſement, that hee was man, that he tooke upon him our nature, that he was abaſed in it, that he humbled himſelfe to death, even to the death of the Croſſe, to bee a ſacrifice for our ſinnes, how doth the ſoule feed on this, on the wonderfull love of God in giving Chriſt to be incarnate, and then to die for us, how doth the ſoule feed upon the death of Chriſt, becauſe by that Gods wrath is appeaſed and he reconciled, *where the dead body is there the Eagles reſort*, ſo doth the ſoule prey and feed upon the dead body of Chriſt, Chriſt crucified is the ſpeciall food of the ſoule.

Conſider him in his Exaltation, in his glorious Reſurrection and Aſcenſion into Heaven, how doth the ſoule feed upon that, Chriſt our Surety is riſen againe, therfore our debt is diſcharged, the juſtice of God is ſatisfied to the full; ſo for his Aſcenſion, when the ſoule is baſely minded on earthly things, it aſcends to Chriſt who is taken up to Hea-

ven for us: ſo his ſitting at the right hand of God, the ſoule feedes on that, becauſe he ſits there till hee have triumphed over all his enemies, till he have trod them all under foot.

Conſider him in his Offices. In ignorance the ſoule feeds on him as a Prophet to inſtruct it; in the ſenſe of wrath and anger the ſoule feeds on him as a Prieſt to make peace and reconciliation: in want of righteouſneſſe, the ſoule feeds on his righteouſneſſe, he is our righteouſneſſe: In the ſenſe of corruption, the ſoule feeds on him as a King, that by his Spirit will ere long worke out all corruption, that as hee will tread downe all our enemies without, ſo he will tread downe all corruption within, he will never leave the ſoule till he have made it a glorious houſe fit for himſelfe.

So the prerogatives wee have by him, the ſoule feeds on them, feeds on his Redemption, that by his Redemption wee are freed from our enemies and all that hate us, and all that we feared, that wee are ſet at liberty from the Law, from ſinne and from death, and notwithſtanding all the debaſements of this world, wee are the ſons of God and heires of Heaven.

In a word, whatſoever is in Chriſt is for our good, Hee is all mine, his Life is mine, his Death is mine, his Reſurrection is mine, his Aſcenſion is mine, all is mine, he is expended and laid open for my good, that's the firſt.

Againe, as in the bodily life, there is a ſtomack, a power to worke out of the meate that which

which is for ſtrength and nouriſhment: ſo in the ſoule, there is faith the ſpirituall mouth and ſtomack of the ſoule to worke and draw out of Chriſt whatſoever is for the comfort and nouriſhment of it; as there is comfort in Chriſt, ſo the Spirit of God gives a man a hand, a mouth as it were, gives a man faith to worke out of Chriſt ſomewhat for comfort; what were food if there were not a ſtomack to digeſt it, to make it a mans owne? ſo what were Chriſt if wee had not faith to lay hold on him?

Againe thirdly, as our life is nouriſhed and maintained with that which is dead, with dead things, ſo the chiefe diſh that maintaineth and nouriſheth the life of the ſoule (as I ſaid before) is Chriſt crucified, *God forbid* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that I ſhould rejoyce in any thing but in Chriſt crucified*, when the ſoule of a poore ſinner is purſued with accuſations from Satan and his owne conſcience, when they take part with God againſt him, whether runs it? to the city of refuge, it runs to Chriſt, to Chriſt crucified, thither the ſoule flies being purſued with the guilt of ſinne, to the hornes of the Altar, as *Ioab* did when hee was purſued, but with better ſucceſſe, for hee was pulled from thence, but the ſoule that flies to Chriſt crucified, to the death of Chriſt, to Chriſt abaſed, to his ſatisfying the wrath of God by his death, and making of us friends with God, there it holds, there it lives, and

there it will continue for ever; this keepes the ſoule alive.

And then againe, as in meate, before it can nouriſh us, there muſt be an union, an aſſimulation, a turning of it into us; ſo Chriſt, except hee be made one with us by faith, unleſſe there bee an union betweene him and us, hee can never nouriſh and comfort us ſavingly.

Againe, as wee oft eate, and after we have received food once, yet we eare againe every day, becauſe there is a decay of ſtrength, and there are ſtill new buſineſſes, new occaſions that require new ſtrength, and therefore there is need of a continuall repairing of our ſtrength by food: Even ſo there is a perpetuall exigence, a continuall need that the ſoule hath to feed upon Chriſt, upon the promiſes of Chriſt, and the prerogatives by Chriſt; becauſe every day we have freſh impediments, freſh aſſaults, and therefore we have need to fetch freſh ſupplies and refreſhment from Chriſt, to have meate from Chriſt every day, to live on Chriſt not onely at the firſt, but continually, that as our corruptions, and temptations, and infirmities returne every day, ſo every day to feed on Chriſt for the repairing of our ſpirituall ſtrength; eſpecially wee are to make daily uſe of the death of Chriſt, for howſoever the death of Chriſt be tranſient in reſpect of the act of it (as one of the Antients ſaith) yet the fruit of it remaines for our daily comfort and refreſhment, his bloud runs every day in the Church afreſh,

like

like a fountaine alwaies powred out for *Iuda* and *Ieruſalem* to waſh in, it alwaies runs, that is, in regard of Gods imputation, in regard of the fruit that comes to the ſoule, and therefore we ſhould make daily uſe of it for the comfort and ſtrength of our ſoules upon all occaſions, *Wee have an Advocate with the Father Ieſus Chriſt the righteous, and hee is the propitiation for our ſinnes,* he is now an Interceſſour in Heaven, hee continually applies the fruit of his death now by his interceſſion in Heaven.

Againe, as after meate received and eaten, there is ſtrength and comfort gotten for the affaires of this life; ſo likewiſe after the ſoule hath digeſted and reliſhed Chriſt, and the benefits and prerogatives that come by him, after we have made the heavenly truths of Chriſt our owne, the ſoule is ſtrengthened to holy duties, it is fit to doe, it is fit to ſuffer, it is fit to reſiſt temptations, it is fit to performe all the ſervices of Chriſtianity.

In theſe and divers other reſpects Chriſt is the bleſſed meate heere mentioned, not himſelf alone, but conſidered with all the bleſſed good things which we have by him: for Chriſt (as I ſaid before) is never alone, if wee have him, we are ſonnes in him, we are heires in him, we are free in him, we are redeemed in him, wee are Kings in him, Prieſts in him, Prophets in him, we are all in him, we have with him all the good things that he hath, for as we have not them without him, ſo we have not him without them,

them, those that have the field, have the pearle in the field, and they that have the pearle in the field, have the field, they that have Christ, have Christ cloathed with all his blessed prerogatives, and priviledges, and comforts.

But wherein lieth the difference betweene this meate, this foode of the soule and other meate?

In these things. First of all, Christ as he is from Heaven, so all the graces and comforts that we have by him are all from Heaven, and they carry us to Heaven, all the other things are earthly.

Secondly, all earthly food doth not give but maintaine life where it is, but Christ hee is such a food as gives life, he is as well life as food, I am the life.

Againe thirdly, the nourishment wee have from this outward food, we turne to our selves, but Christ this spirituall meate, turnes us into himselfe, transformes us into his owne likenesse, for Christ offered to us in the Gospell being digested by Faith, doth by his Spirit change us every way into his owne likenesse.

Lastly, all other meats are consumed in the spending, and there will a time come when wee shall not be able to relish any worldly thing, our mouth will be out of taste with these outward things; But Christ the food of the soule is never consumed, but growes more and more,

and

and when wee can reliſh no other, wee may reliſh this food that indures to everlaſting life, it alwaies ſatisfies the ſoule: all earthly things are as ſalt water that increaſe the appetite but ſatisfie not, onely Chriſt and grace and the comforts we have by him ſatisfie and that everlaſtingly, they are as a ſpring that never dyes: As he himſelfe in his owne perſon endures to everlaſting life, ſo all that we have by him is everlaſting, grace is everlaſting, grace ends in glory: Chriſt alwayes ſatisfies, though not wholy here, becauſe there muſt be a continuall recourſe to him, yet hee will ſatisfie hereafter, *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe, for they ſhall be ſatisfied.*

Thus you ſee what is meant by the food that endures to everlaſting life, and the reaſon of the reſemblance, and the difference that is betweene this and other meate.

Here are arguments enough then to enforce us to a labouring after this meate that endures to everlaſting life, that is ſo agreeable to the beſt part of us, that is able to make us happy, to labour by Faith to get them to bee our owne.

Now the labour required is eſpecially to get a ſtomacke to this meate, God requires nothing of us when we come to his delicacies but that we bring a good ſtomacke with us, I will therfore ſpeake a little of that, what wee muſt doe to get an appetite to this ſpirituall meate.

A good ſtomacke we know is procured by ſharp

ſharpe things, *the Paſchall Lamb was to be eaten with ſowre hearbs*, if we would have an appetite after Chriſt, labour daily to conſider what a curſed eſtate we are in without Chriſt: God hath left the Law as for other purpoſes ſo for this, that we ſhould feed upon the threatnings of it, that it ſhould drive us to Chriſt; A legall faith is the way to evangelicall. Labour therefore thorowly to bee convinced of the need thou ſtandeſt in of Chriſt, and then I need not bid thee to labour for the food that endures to everlaſting life, that will ſharpen thy appetite after it: And beg of God illumination to ſee the ill that is in thee, and the ill that belongs to thee: God hath left infirmities and corruptions in us on purpoſe for this end, and likewiſe we have tentations without us, we carry not onely a Hell within us (which if God ſhould not keepe in would carry us to deſpaire) but there is a hell without us, the tentations of Satan, the accuſations of the Law, the anger and wrath of God; thus we ſhould labour to be convinced of our wretched eſtate without Chriſt, the danger we are in if God ſhould take us hence on a ſuddaine, this will force every day a freſh appetite and ſtomacke in the ſoule to feed on Chriſt.

Secondly if we would ſharpen our appetites to this foode, wee muſt purge our ſtomackes which naturally ſurfet of earthly things, purge the ſoule by a conſideration of the vanity of all other things that draw us from Chriſt: the

reaſon

reaſon why we have no better reliſh of Chriſt and heavenly things is, becauſe we cleave in our affections ſo much to earthly things, we ſet up Idols in our hearts inſtead of Chriſt, and wee cleave in an adulterous and falſe affection unto them. Let us ſet before us arguments of the vanity of all things but Chriſt, and there can be no better argument then here is ſet downe, they are all periſhing things: that which the ſoule neglects Chriſt and Heaven and happineſſe for, and is ſo madly ſet upon, alas they are all baſe in reſpect of the ſoule, the whole world is not worth a ſoule, they are all periſhing things, of leſſe continuance then the ſoule is; we ſhould purge our ſoules by ſuch conſiderations as theſe.

Then againe thirdly: Exerciſe getteth a ſtomacke, let us every day ſpend our ſpirituall ſtrength in ſpirituall exerciſes, in reſiſting tentations, in withſtanding the ſnares of Satan, in bearing thoſe daily croſſes that God laies upon us, live as Chriſtians ſhould live, and the exerciſe of a Chriſtian life will inforce us to goe unto Chriſt to feed on him, to fetch from him ſpirituall ſtrength; when in our daily exerciſe we ſhall ſee the continuall neede wee have of pardon for daily ſinnes, of comfort and ſtrength againſt daily corruptions and infirmities, this will make us feede on Chriſt and on the promiſes made in him, not onely on the promiſe of forgiveneſſe, but on the promiſe of a ſupply of neceſſary grace, on that ſweet promiſe, *that he*

he will not quench the ſmoaking flax nor breake the bruiſed reede, feede on him as a King to ſubdue our corruptions, *&c.* the daily exerciſe of a Chriſtian life will force us unto Chriſt.

Againe, to whet our appetite after Chriſt, conſider the neceſſity wee have of ſpirituall ſtrength and comfort: when a man conſiders that he hath a journey to take, hee will eate to enable him to his journey, as *Elias* was bid to riſe up and eate becauſe he had a journey to go, we are all to take a journey as farre as Heaven, and we are to travell through the wildernesſe of this world, and wee ſhall be daily aſſaulted (beſides our inward corruptions) with divers tentations, and therefore we had need every day to fetch ſtrength from Chriſt: and conſider that ſickneſſe will come, and death will ſurprize us, and if we have not Chriſt we are wretched creatures without him: and though we have applied Chriſt to our ſelves and made him our owne, yet a time of deſertion, a time of tryall will come: Thus the neceſſity of ſpirituall ſtrength will force us to feede upon Chriſt.

Againe to get us a ſtomacke to theſe things, let us converſe with thoſe that are ſpirituall, with thoſe that are heavenly minded, that have taſted of heavenly things, when we ſee them delight in reading, delight in hearing, when we ſee them contemplate of Heaven and heavenly things, on Chriſt and the benefits wee have by

by Christ, on the blessed condition of a better life and of the world to come, when wee see these persons that are better then our selves, that have lesse cause then we, take such paines for their soules, we will be ashamed of our own neglect, and it will be the discourse of a soule presently with it selfe, surely there is some excellent strength and comfort in these things, some extraordinary sweetnesse and refreshment that these men find, that they so fall to them: it is a great advantage to converse with those that are spirituall.

And lastly, to put an edge to our dull appetites after this food, consider, we know not how soone this table that Christ hath spread, these dainties that wisedome hath provided for us in the Ministry of the Word may bee taken from us, therefore let us fall too while we have them; We should doe as those doe that being at a feast and have neglected feeding, at the latter end when they see all ready to be taken away fall too a fresh: we know not how long we may enjoy these blessed opportunities, therefore now with *Ioseph*, let us lay up against a time of scarcity, there will a hard winter come, therefore let us imitate the wisedome of that poore creature the *Ant*, to provide against winter: Now while the *Iubile* is let us take out a pardon: there is a time of spending to come, now *let us get oyle in our Lamps*: Now is the seed time, now are the waters stirred in the poole of *Bethesda*: Now is the acceptable time

time of grace, wee know not how long it ſhall continue, therefore now let us labour for the food that endureth to everlaſting life. I never knew any repent of the paines they had taken for their ſoules, but many that have lamented and bewailed the precious time they have ſpent, and that they have not beene good husbands for their ſoules: It is one ſpeciall point of heavenly wiſedome to take advantage of our precious time, to fill it up with holy exerciſes; let us often offer this conſideration to our ſoules, wherefore was I ſent hither into this world, what is the end why I live heere? is it to ſcrape together periſhing things and ſo to periſh with them, or am I not rather ſent hither to get out of the ſtate of corruption wherein we all are by nature? to get into Chriſt, to make him mine own, to be turned into him, to feed on him, to get joy and comfort, and ſtrength from him? is not this the end why I live heere?

But to goe on, and to make an uſe of triall, whether we have as wee ſhould doe reliſhed and taſted Chriſt, whether wee have fed on this meate or no. How ſhall we know that?

I anſwer, we may eaſily know it: For firſt of all, if wee have reliſhed Chriſt and the good things by him, we diſreliſh all other things, we begin to have a baſer eſteeme of all earthly things. It is with the ſoule as it is with a Ballance, when Chriſt is high in the ſoule, other things are low, and when other things are high, Chriſt is low in the ſoule: Chriſt was high in

Pauls

Pauls ſoule, therefore he eſteemed all as dung in compariſon of the excellent knowledge of Chriſt. The poore Woman of *Samaria* when ſhee had heard Chriſt, and taſted the ſweetneſſe that was in him, downe goes her water-pot, and ſhee runs to the City and tells them, *I have ſeene a man that hath told mee all things, is not this the Meſſiah? Zaccheus*, when he had taſted of grace, and had the pardon of his ſinnes by Chriſt, *halfe my goods I give to the poore*, &c. when grace is planted in the ſoule, when the ſoule hath taſted once of better things, there will be a meane and baſe eſteeme of earthly things: the more the ſoule feeds on heavenly things, the leſſe reſpect it hath to temporall things. The ſoule is a finite Eſſence, and it cannot ſpend it ſelfe on all things, the more it runs into ſeveralls, the more ſhallow it is to others; as in a ſtreame, when it is cut into many channels it runs weakely in the ſeverall, whereas it runs ſtrongly in the maine; ſo it is with the ſoule, when it is ſcattered, as the poore *Iſraelites* were about the land of Ægypt to gather ſtraw, to gather theſe periſhing earthly things, it is weake to heavenly things, it hath little ſtrength to thoſe, but when the courſe of it is wholy bent to thoſe, there are but weake or no deſires running to theſe earthly things, when once the ſoule of a Chriſtian hath had a true taſte and reliſh of the things of Heaven, it lookes with a deſpiſing eye upon whatſoever is heere below; when once it hath taſted of Chriſt, then eſpecially

cially it growes out of reliſh with poyſon, then away with Popery, away with falſe doctrine, away with hypocriſie, and formality in religion.

Againe ſecondly, wee may know that wee have taſted Chriſt and fed on him, and on the good things that are by him, when wee are ſtrengthened by our feeding, when wee are ſtrengthened to duties, ſtrengthened againſt tentations and againſt corruptions. Thou ſaiſt thou beleeveſt on Chriſt and haſt made him thine own, what comfort and ſtrength feeleſt thou by Chriſt? art thou able to encounter a tentation? art thou able to reſiſt a luſt? art thou able to performe holy ſervices? If there be no ſtrength in thee, but every tentation turnes thee over, and thou yeeldeſt to every baſe luſt, where is Chriſt? canſt thou beleeve Chriſt to be thy King, and yet ſuffer thy luſts to beare ſway in thee? canſt thou beleeve that Chriſt is a Prieſt that died for thy ſinnes, and yet cheriſheſt and loveſt ſinne? canſt thou beleeve that Chriſt is in Heaven and that thou art in heavenly places with Chriſt, and yet haſt no minde of heavenly things, but art carried away with every earthly thing? No, thou haſt not yet taſted how good and gracious the Lord is, thou haſt not yet reliſhed the heavenly Manna: the ſoule that feeds on Chriſt is ſtrengthened from ſpirituall reaſons and ſupernaturall grounds and divine principles drawne from Chriſt to duty, ſo that it is enabled even with a holy violence

lence to doe any thing for Christs sake; for the soule reasons thus, Christ gave himselfe to death for mee, I will therefore (if need be) give my selfe to death for him, Christ thought nothing too deare for mee, I will thinke nothing too deare for him, this pride, this vanity that I am tempted to, these were the speares that were the death of my Saviour; thus the soule fetches reasons from the death of Christ to strengthen it against temptations, to strengthen it to duty: and so for the matter of comfort, after meate hath beene received wee are refreshed, if the soule be sweetly refreshed with the comforts that are to be had in Christ, and in the Word of Christ, it is a signe wee have tasted Christ: those that have trembling and discouraging hearts and soules, that cannot rest nor receive comfort, it is a signe they have not rightly tasted Christ, *Come unto mee* (saith Christ) *all yee that are weary and heavie laden, and yee shall finde rest to your soules*; in Christ there is rest, out of Christ there is no rest; and so likewise those that have corruptions bearing sway in them, it is a signe they have not so much as touched Christ, for if they had but touched Christ hee would stop the issue of their corruptions; the poore woman in the Gospell as soon as she had touched Christ, her bloudy issue was stayed, so upon the least touch of Christ by faith, there will be an abating of corruption.

Thirdly, in the bodily life we know, after a good meale, the desire and appetite is satisfied;

ſo the ſoule that taſtes of Chriſt, it hath ſweet ſatisfaction and contentment: O the ſweet ſatisfaction that a Chriſtian ſoule hath above a Heathen. A Chriſtian that hath Chriſt need not goe out of him for any thing, it hath fullneſſe and ſatisfaction in him in all eſtates, both in life and in death; doſt thou finde Chriſt, and the priviledges and prerogatives we have by him, doſt thou finde the Word of Chriſt and the promiſes of the Word fully and ſufficiently ſatisfie thee, then it argues that thou haſt fed on Chriſt, for Chriſt being received by faith into the ſoule, gives it fullneſſe and contentment.

Laſtly, to name no more, as men (if they have the grace of God in their hearts) will give thankes for their bodily food; ſo it is an evidence that we have fed on Chriſt when our hearts and tongues are enlarged to praiſe God for Chriſt, for the comforts and contentment and ſatisfaction that we finde in him and in religion; therefore Saint *Paul* begins his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, with *Bleſſed bee God the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpirituall bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt*. And Saint *Peter* being led by the ſame bleſſed Spirit, his heart being full, his mouth is full of thankes, *Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who hath begotten us againe to an inheritance immortall, that fadeth not away, reſerved for you in the heavens* (for you that are reſerved by faith to ſalvation) ſo undoubtedly the

the ſoule that taſts the ſweet comforts of Religion in Chriſt will be much in ſweet inlargements of heart in thankſgiving, it cannot be otherwaiſe, it is an univerſall reaſon, the more beleeving a ſoule is, the more thankefull a ſoul is, where there is no praiſe, there is no faith.

Thus you ſee how we may try whether we have taſted and reliſhed, whether *wee have fed upon the food that endures to everlaſting life or no.*

Taſte is the moſt neceſſary ſenſe of all (ſaith a wiſe ſearcher of the myſteries of Nature) our life is maintained by taſte: Every creature ſees not, every creature heares not, but every creature hath taſte: you may judge of your ſelves by your taſte and reliſh, and if once you have taſted and reliſhed Chriſt, all the world cannot perſwade you to fall from him, if all ſhould ſay there were no ſweetneſſe in Religion, that it were better to be a worldling, *&c.* you would defie it, you would never beleeve it, there is no diſputing againſt what a man taſts, if all men ſhould ſay ſugar were ſharpe, if I once taſted it I would ſay otherwiſe.

Labour for the meate that endures to everlaſting life.

The Arguments enforcing this act upon the object, to labour for Chriſt, are, that he is food, and food that endures, *and food that endures to everlaſting life.*

Let me from theſe arguments heere in the text (for J will draw no other) inforce what I have ſaid before, J have ſhewed you what this labour is, and rules how you may know whether you rightly labour for this food or no: Now to inforce this act, conſider firſt the neceſſity of that our Saviour here injoynes us too, *it is food.*

It is a ſtrange thing that perſons ſhould perſwade themſelves that they are Chriſtians, and yet goe from day to day without refreſhing themſelves with Chriſt, and with the meditation of the bleſſed eſtate they are in by him, both in reſpect of this world and that which is to come, without getting ſtrength from Chriſt againſt tentations and againſt corruptions: Chriſt is foode, and the promiſes and prerogatives we have by him are food, wee ſhould labour after it every day, feede on it every day: If a man ſhould aske a man in his calling, why doe you take ſuch paines Morning and Evening, riſing early and going to bed late? Hee would anſwer it is to get bread, it is to get food to maintaine my family: So ſhould it bee our anſwer to any that wonder why wee take ſuch paines for our ſoules, why wee labour ſo after Chriſt, Oh remember we take paines for life, to get and mainetaine life, and what is ſo neceſſary as life? And if life bee ſo neceſſary, food which preſerves it muſt be neceſſary: we ſee the Patriarks for food left their country, and the poore *Ægyptians* ſold themſelves and their

their cattell and all to get food to keepe life. We famish eternally except we feed on Christ, except we have so much Faith as makes us one with him, except by Faith we digest him and get nourishment and strength from him: it will appeare to be so when it is too late, ere long nothing in the world will relish us, and then if we have not Christ and the things of another life to relish us what will become of us? I beseech you consider what opinion and judgement wee shall have ere long of these earthly things and of the better things of another world, at the houre of death our judgements will be convinced that the things of Heaven are the best things: and if it bee true that they will bee so then, why is it not true that they are so now? Labour to have the same judgement now.

With the necessity our blessed Saviour joyneth the excellency of this food, *It is foode that endures to everlasting life:* Christ and the good things we have by him are of equall extent and of equall time with our soules, if wee labour for earthly things, we labour after that which is of shorter continuance then our soules, we may out-live our happinesse, and what a miserable state is that? But if we labour for the food that endures to everlasting life, our happinesse is of the same continuance with our soules, and that is onely true happinesse.

If there were such a Tree upon the Earth now as there was in Paradice, a Tree of life,

that whosoever should taste of the fruit of it should live, though but on the Earth here to enjoy his sensuall pleasures. Oh what would not men give for a little fruit of that Tree, though it were to redeeme a little time and to lengthen out a fading base life on earth, but much more to live for ever: *Here is food that endures to everlasting life*, to such a life as is heavenly and glorious. Now blessed be God that since we are cast out of the first Paradice by sinne, that now in our relapsed estate God is so mercifull to us as to provide another manner of Tree of life, that in Paradice was but a typicall Tree, the true Tree of life is Christ, and whosoever feeds on him shall not perish but have everlasting life; certainely if we beleeved this, it could not be, but it would wondrously set us on to labour after this meate, because it is not onely food that tends to the preservation of life, but to life everlasting, to a life that endures as long as our soules.

And let us know that if wee doe not labour for this meate that brings to this life, looke what degree of excellency we have had in the ranke of the creatures the same degree we shall have in misery, for as the Angels in the degree of excellency were the most excellent creatures, but being fallen they are in the same degree of misery that they were in happinesse and are now the most accursed creatures of all others: So man as he is a most excellent creature, if he feed on the food that endures to everlasting

verlasting life, so it like *Nebuchadnezzar* he feed as a beast on earthly things and forget his soule and affections which are made to close and feede on Christ and better things, he shall have the same degree of misery that he hath in happinesse, even next to the Divells the most wretched creature that can be: What if a man were clad as *Aaron* was in all his pontificality, in his Priestly robes? What if hee should feed deliciously every day as *Dives*? what and if he had the wisedome of *Salomon*, the strength of *Samson*? what and if he had all the kingdomes of the world? if he have not the *food that endures to everlasting life*, he should bee stripped of all these ere long, it is onely Christ and the good things that are to bee had in him and by him that continue everlastingly.

This should inforce us to labour after this food in the use of all good meanes: and before I leave the point, consider the reality, the truth of these heavenly things, of these things wee have by Christ the second *Adam*, all things else are shadowes: The food that nourisheth the body it is not food in comparison of that, earthly kingdomes are not kingdomes in respect of that, earthly sonneship is not sonneship to that, earthly riches they are nothing, they are vanity in comparison of that, earthly inheritance is no inheritance in comparison of the inheritance we have by Christ, all other things are but titles of things, they are but empty things, there is a reality in Christ, a truth in the

kingdome of grace: Alas what is riches, what are pleasures, what are honours, what is sonneship, what are all earthly things in comparison of the soule which is an immortall, a spirituall, an eternall substance, they are but shadowes; those things that are of equall extent and continuance with the soule, and not onely of equall extent, but that raise the soule to have communion with God in Heaven, with the Father, Sonne and Holy Ghost, there is the reality, there is the truth, if we will have the truth of things: *I am that bread* (saith Christ afterward in this Chapter) *and my flesh is meate indeed and my blood is drinke indeed*, as if other meat and other drinke refreshed not indeed, but were onely shadowes of things.

Labour therefore for this meate, and certainely if so be the Spirit of God once convince your judgements that these things which I say are true, both for the necessity and excellency of this foode, they will be effectuall to stirre you up to labour more after this foode that endures to everlasting life. So much for that.

Which the Sonne of man shall give you, for him hath God the Father Sealed.

To come now to the possibility of attaining this food, which is the third argument our blessed Saviour useth to enforce upon us this injunction, to *labour for the food that endures to*

everlasting life. Hope stirreth up endeavour, as we see in marchandizing, though when wee venter beyond the seas we commit all to winde and water (as they say) and it is doubtfull what the issue may be, yet we hope, and that sets us on worke: So the poore Husbandman, but that he hopes to have a comfortable issue, to have a harvest, he would never set himselfe to worke. Now heere is hope, and hope on a better ground a great deale, for hee that makes other things successefull, he hath given Christ for this purpose, and Christ (you see heere) hee gives himselfe, *which the Sonne of man shall give you.*

Heere is all that we may ground and found our hope upon, heere is will, heere is power, and here is authority to give it.

Heere is will, Christ will give it, why? because he is the Sonne of man. What use is there of these words in this place? why doth he not say which the Sonne of God shall give you?

O the Sonne of God without the Sonne of man is indeed a Fountaine of good things, but he is a sealed Fountaine, alas of no comfort, our comfort is in Emanuell God-Man, all our comfort is to be brought back to God from whom we fell in Paradise, and we must bee brought backe againe to God by God, but unlesse God had become man, man had never come backe againe to God, therefore all the union and communion we have with God it dependson this

this first union of Christ with our nature, that the Sonne of God became the Sonne of man (as Saint *Austine* saith) for now the next union that we become the Sons of God it comes from this, that God became man: and therefore he saith heere, *the Sonne of man shall give it you*, you need not climbe up to Heaven to fetch this food that endures to everlasting life, for the Sonne of God is come downe from Heaven to Earth, to take the nature of man, and in that to die, in that to satisfie Gods wrath, and so to become this blessed and everlasting food. The Sonne of man, the second *Adam*, as by one man we all come to misery, so by the second *Adam* (by man) wee are restored to a blessed condition againe: therefore he saith heere *the Sonne of man*, because in the humane nature all our salvation was wrought: indeed the worth and efficacie of our salvation comes from the divine nature, but it was wrought in mans nature, the divine nature could not worke it alone. But I will not dwell on this.

The Sonne of man shall give it you, you neede not feare it, God is become man on purpose to give it you, we may now boldly go to a Mediator which is made bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, wee should have feared and trembled if hee had onely beene God, but now all grace and comfort is hid in this nature of ours in Christ: if Christ had not tooke this poore wretched nature of ours upon him, it had beene a hatefull nature to God, God hated the nature

of

of man, but now becauſe the Sonne of God is become the Sonne of man, our nature is become lovely in the eyes of God, and not onely lovely, but it is filled in him with all grace, and of his *fullneſſe wee receive grace for grace.* Hee will give it therefore, becauſe he is *the Sonne of man.*

Heere is will, I but what power and ſtrength hath he to give it?

He is ſo the Sonne of man as that hee is alſo the Sonne of God, therefore we are ſaid (*Acts* 20.) *to bee redeemed with the blood of God*, Chriſt by his eternall Spirit, by his God-head offered himſelfe a Sacrifice for ſinne; ſo that he can give it becauſe he is God.

But what authority hath he?

He is *Sealed* to doe it, that's the third, that is, he hath authority, for authority is here expreſſed by Sealing. Now Chriſt is ſaid to be *Sealed*, firſt, becauſe there is the impreſſion of God upon him, even as the ſeale imprints in the wax the likeneſſe of that which is in it, ſo God hath imprinted in Chriſt his owne likeneſſe, he is the Image of God, for Chriſt as he is God, is the character of his Father, and his humane nature is likewiſe as like God as nature can expreſſe, *we ſaw* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *his glory, the glory as of the onely begotten Sonne of God*, we ſaw a kinde of divinity in him as much as humane nature could receive, the likeneſſe of God ſparkeled in him; therefore hee is ſaid to be *Sealed*, but that is not all nor the principall here meant.

Againe

Againe ſecondly, the uſe of a ſeale is to appropriate and diſtinguiſh from other things, ſo Chriſt is *Sealed*, that is, God hath appropriated him to be his owne Sonne, and to be a Mediator of his owne appointing, and hath diſtinguiſhed him from all others by a bleſſed annointing and qualification of him above all, he is as *Saul* amongſt the reſt, higher then all, he is as *Aaron*, annointed with the oyle of gladneſſe, but above his fellowes, and yet for his fellowes, from him diſtills the bleſſed ointment of grace, it is powred on his head firſt, and deſcends from him downe to all the skirts of his garment, to all his members. So heere is in this Sealing, likeneſſe, diſtinction, and appropriation.

But eſpecially by Sealing heere is meant authority, for a thing ſealed is not onely to diſtinguiſh and appropriate to a mans uſe, but to authorize alſo, as a Magiſtrate that hath the Kings broad Seale, he is authorized: ſo Chriſt he hath Gods Seale, God hath authorized him to be a Mediator, and as hee was fore-ordained
1 Pet. 1. before all worlds (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith) to be the head of them that ſhould be ſaved, and to be their Mediator, ſo when the fullneſſe of time was come, when he came in the fleſh, hee was authorized by the greateſt teſtimony that ever was, by the bleſſed Trinity, God the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghoſt at his Baptiſme, *This is my beloved Sonne, heare him*, ſaith a voice from Heaven, there was the Father, the

Sonne

Sonne in the voice, the Holy Ghoſt in the Dove, there was the whole Trinity, ſo he was authorized from Heaven.

And then he was authorized by his miracles, God gave him power to worke thoſe workes which none could doe but a Mediator, therefore he ſaith, *if you beleeve not me, yet beleeve me for my workes ſake.*

He was authorized alſo by his Reſurrection, as the Apoſtle ſaith, in *Rom.* 1.4. *He mightily declared himſelfe to be the Sonne of God by the reſurrection from the dead:* the Angells from Heaven brought witneſſe of him, he was witneſſed by all kinde of perſons on earth, yea by the divels themſelves: ſo hee is *Sealed* and authorized every way by all kinde of witneſſes to be a Mediator.

This is ſet out in other phraſes in the Scripture. In *Pſal.* 2. *This my Son have I ſet upon my holy hill of Sion*, and *Rom.* 3. toward the latter end, *Whom God hath ſet forth to bee a propitiation, God hath ſet him forth as the Shew-bread* was ſet out under the Law. And then againe in another place, *Whom hee hath ſent*, and in 1. *Cor.* 1.30. *Hee is made of God unto us Wiſedome*, &c. *Hee is made of God*, that is, he is *Sealed*, appointed, authorized by God for that purpoſe.

So you ſee, why Chriſt is ſaid to be *Sealed*, eſpecially becauſe hee is authorized by God the Father, *made, ſent, ſet forth, whom the Father hath Sealed*, that is, the party offended by our ſinnes, he hath *Sealed* and authorized Chriſt to be a Mediator.

If

If this be ſo, let us learne this uſe of it, to bleſſe God the Father as well as Chriſt, *Bleſſed bee the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*, and *Bleſſed bee Chriſt*, for him hath the Father *Sealed* by the Spirit. The bleſſed Trinity have all a hand in our ſalvation.

And then againe conſider, if wee deſpiſe Chriſt, whom we deſpiſe, we deſpiſe the Father that hath *Sealed* him, it is a weighty matter, Reade the ſecond Pſalme and you ſhall ſee there what it is to deſpiſe Chriſt, not to kiſſe the Sonne, that is, when God hath annointed and ſet forth a Saviour, and *Sealed* him and authorized him by all the teſtimonies that can be to be a Mediator, not to receive him for our King, for our Prieſt and Prophet, it is a rebellion, not againſt Chriſt onely, but againſt the Father who hath *Sealed* him.

And likewiſe it ſerveth wonderfully to ſtrengthen our faith when we goe to God for forgiveneſſe of ſinnes: offer him his owne broad Seale, offer to him Chriſt a Mediator authorized by himſelfe: Lord I am thus and thus a ſinner, but notwithſtanding thou haſt ſent thy bleſſed Sonne and ſet him forth to be a Saviour for mee, and him I offer to thee, thou canſt not deny or refuſe thy owne *Sealed* Mediator and Redeemer, if hee had beene a Mediator of my owne appointing and of my owne ſealing it were another matter, but I offer thy owne Mediator, looke on the death of him whom thou haſt *Sealed* to bee

my

my interceſſour. It is a wondrous prevailing argument with God, hee cannot denie that which he hath deviſed himſelfe, him whom hee choſe before all worlds for this great office.

But how ſhall I know whether hee be *Sealed* for my good or no? ſaith the ſoule that heares this, we heare much of an authorized Saviour, of an authorized Mediator to be All-ſufficient, but what is that to mee?

Why? for whom is he *Sealed?* is he *Sealed* for Angels or for men? and amongſt men, is he *Sealed* for holy men or ſinners? *I come not to ſeeke or to ſave* whole men, or men that never were loſt, no, he came to ſeeke and to ſave men, but they are loſt men, ſick men: and it is a faithfull ſaying, and worthy of all meanes to be imbraced, *that Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners,* ſaith bleſſed *Paul,* therefore he is *Sealed* to ſave thee if thou art a ſinner, to ſave thee if thou wilt receive him, and thou art bound to receive him under paine of the puniſhment of rebellion. Is it not rebellion not to receive a Magiſtrate whom the Prince hath authorized under his broad Seale? it is another manner of matter not to receive Chriſt, it is a greater ſinne, then to ſinne againſt the Law, for if a man ſinne againſt the Law there is the Goſpell to helpe him, but if a man ſinne againſt the Goſpell there is not another Goſpell to helpe him, now to refuſe Chriſt offered in the Goſpell is a ſinne againſt the Goſpell, where then

then can there bee hope of ſalvation? ſalvation it ſelfe cannot ſave him that will not bee ſaved, that refuſes the remedy *Sealed* by God the Father the party offended, who can heale him that caſts downe the Potion that is brought to heale him, that refuſeth the Phyſitian that comes to cure him? I ſay hee is *Sealed* to ſave thee if thou wilt be ſaved, if thou wilt receive him, receive him not onely to be thy Saviour, but to be thy King to rule thee, and thy Prophet to teach and inſtruct thee, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

But to cleare this a little better, we muſt know that there are three diſtinct ſealings.

There is God ſealing of Chriſt, which I have unfolded to you.

And there is our ſealing of God, that is, our ſealing of Gods truth.

And then againe, there is Gods ſealing of us by his Spirit: And theſe follow one the other.

Why hath God ſealed Chriſt; but that wee hereupon ſhould be ſtirred up to believe, and to receive Chriſt, and ſo by conſequence to ſeale that God is true in ſending ſuch a bleſſed Mediator, as S^t. *Iohn* ſaith, *He that believes in the Sonne hath ſet to his ſeale that God is true.* God hath ſealed him that we by receiving him ſhould ſeale Gods truth.

Iohn 3.33.

Beloved, God comes to us for our teſtimonialls, for our hands and ſeals, Oh how wondrouſly doth God condeſcend to weake man!

He

He hath ſealed Chriſt for the office of a Mediator, and he offers him unto us, and he comes to us likewiſe that we would ſet to our ſeales too, that Chriſt is the Sonne of God, he counts it not ſufficient that he hath ſealed him himſelfe, but he will have us ſeale too, and we ſeale him when we receive him, he that receives him hath ſet to his ſeale that God is true, he that doth not receive him, *he makes God a lyar*, ſaith Saint *Iohn.*

And what comes of this when wee receive Chriſt and ſet to our ſeale that God in the promiſe of ſalvation by Chriſt is true? Then we having honoured him, he honours us by ſealing us by his Spirit, as the Apoſtle ſaith: *Epheſ.* 1. *In whom after ye beleeved yee were ſealed*, So when we beleeve and ſet to our ſeale that God is true, God ſeales us by his Spirit, *after yee beleeved you were ſealed.*

But what is this ſeale of the Spirit whereby God ſeals us after we beleeve?

I anſwer, God ſeales us when hee ſets the ſtampe of his Spirit upon us, when the worke and witneſſe of his Spirit is wrought in us: For as in a ſeale, the wax hath all in it, the whole likeneſſe of the Jmage that is in the ſeale: So the ſoule that is ſealed by the Spirit hath the likeneſſe of the Spirit of Chriſt ſtamped on it, God imprints in their ſpirits the likeneſſe of his Sonne, that is to ſay, he makes them loving ſoules, humble ſoules, obedient as Chriſt was in all things, patient, meeke, *&c.* you may

ſee in the ſpirit of a beleeving man an expreſſion of the Spirit of Chriſt, ſo that if you would ſee Chriſt in his excellencies, looke on the ſpirit of a true Chriſtian, there you ſhall ſee a reſemblance of Chriſt Jeſus, not perfectly but in ſome comfortable meaſure, you ſhall ſee the very Image of Chriſt, you ſhall ſee how full of love he is, how patient in croſſes, how humble, how meeke, how obedient to God in all things both in a paſſive and active obedience. This is the ſtampe of the Spirit, when a man beleeves God honours him by ſetting his Image on him.

And yet this is not all, beſides this wee are ſealed with the witneſſe and comfort of the Spirit as well as with the worke of the Spirit, the Spirit of God ſweetly witneſſing that we are the ſons of God: and this ſweet witneſſe of the Spirit eſpecially comes after wee have honoured God by beleeving in temptation, when we are able to hold out and ſay as *Iob* ſaid, *Though he kill me yet wil I truſt in him*, ſo when we can after conflicts of doubting and diſpaire, ſay, *though he kill me yet will I truſt in him*, I will ſet to my ſeale that he is true, well will you ſo? God to honour ſuch a ſoule ſeales him to the day of redemption, that is, he gives to the ſoule of ſuch a one a ſweet evidence and teſtimony that hee is the Son of God.

And this ſeale of the Spirit is double, not only done by the witneſſe and worke of the Spirit inwardly (which I have ſhewed) but likewiſe

wiſe the Spirit doth ſeale them outwardly, inabling them to make an outward confeſſion of Chriſt and his Truth, and therefore in *Reve.* 14. Chriſtians are ſaid to be *Sealed in the forehead*, that is, as they are marked and ſingled out in ill times to be ſuch as God hath ſet his ſpeciall favour upon, ſo they are *Sealed* with a ſpirit of boldneſſe willingly and with forwardneſſe to confeſſe the truth of Chriſt in ill times.

Now (to apply it to our purpoſe) wouldeſt thou know whether thou be ſuch a one for the preſent as for whom Chriſt is *Sealed* a Mediator? Examine firſt of all whether thou haſt put to thy Seale that God is true by receiving and beleeving Chriſt and the promiſe of Salvation through him, if thou haſt done ſo then thou wilt finde another Seale from God, even the worke of the Spirit in ſanctifying of thee and conforming of thee to the Image and likeneſſe of Chriſt, and thou wilt finde the witneſſe and comfortable teſtimony of the Spirit in telling thee that thou art the Sonne of God: and withall thou wilt have a ſpirit of boldneſſe and readineſſe and forwardneſſe to confeſſe Chriſt, thou wilt not care for al that the world ſaith, but wilt if (neede be) ſtand to the profeſſion of Religion to the death.

If thou canſt finde this in thy ſelfe, undoubtedly thou art not onely ſuch a one as Chriſt came to Seale, but for the preſent, thou mayeſt be aſſured that thou haſt intereſt in this Media-

tor Sealed by God for that purpoſe.

Thus you ſee that here *is food that endures to everlaſting life*, which is Chriſt and the benefits wee have by him, you ſee that that bleſſed meate is attaineable, becauſe he is willing to give it, for he is become Man for that purpoſe, he is able to give it, for he is God as well as Man, and he hath aurhority to give it, for God the Father hath *Sealed* him and fitted him for that office. If we receive him he will *Seale* us with his bleſſed Spirit, that is, the ſame Spirit that furniſhed Chriſt with grace, that ſanctified him in the wombe, will ſanctifie all thoſe that are his members, will worke a likeneſſe and conformity in them to his bleſſed Image, for the ſame Spirit that was in the naturall Sonne is in all the adopted Sonnes of God. And he will likewiſe give us the comfortable evidence and aſſurance that we are the Sons of God, furniſh us with boldneſſe and reſolution to profeſſe Chriſt in all times.

Let me then I beſeech you come againe to reenforce this exhortation: Take heed you refuſe not Chriſt, conſider with what authority he comes, *he is Sealed*, it is no preſumption therefore to receive him, though you be never ſuch ſinners, to receive him (I meane) not onely to be a Prieſt to reconcile you to God, but to be a King to rule you, and a Prophet to inſtruct you by his Spirit, to receive him on this manner is no preſumption; to receive him indeed as a Saviour, but to neglect him as King,

to

to refuse to come under his government is great presumption, but to receive whole Christ is obedience and faith and no presumption, nay if you doe not receive him you sinne damnably, you commit the greatest sinne that can be: He came to save all that will come under his blessed government, that will kisse the Sonne, *Whosoever will, let him come and drinke of the waters of life*, all the good promised by Christ is promised upon our receiving of him, upon the obedience of our Faith, there is nothing required but a will to imbrace him and to be under his government, there is no exception made of sinnes or persons or times. *At what time soever a sinner repents, whatsoever sinner, whatsoever time or whatsoever the sinnes bee, if he repents* Christ is ready to receive him. Reve. 22.

If you pretend your unworthinesse and want of excellencies, hee takes away that objection, *Come unto me all that are weary and heavy laden, Come buy without money*, and here in the text, *the Sonne of man shall give it*, and what so free as guift? Mat. 11 28. Isa. 55. 1.

If you pretend you have sinned since your calling, and that you have sinned against conscience, and knowledge, and therefore now you have no further hope of Christ: remember that *Paul* 2. *Cor.* 5. speakes to the Corinthians that were in the state of grace, *I beseech you to be reconciled to God*, and in *Ieremy* 3. *Returne againe you Backesliding Israel, and I will heale your Backeslidings*, and againe, *will*

a man receive a wife that hath played the harlot and broken the band of marriage? Yet returne O house of Israel and I will receive you, Therefore runne not away from God, though thou hast sinned after thou art in the state of grace, come againe I beseech you still Christ is to be received, the doore of grace is alwayes held open, and the golden scepter continually held out as long as we live in this world.

But yet it is not good to neglect the time of grace, receive Christ presently, deferre not to come under his governement, and receive him wholy, or else there is no receiving of him at all.

And (to presse this a little further) I beseech you consider, that if you leave not your sinfull courses and come under the blessed governement of Christ, if you receive not this *Sealed* King, this *Sealed* Priest and Prophet, this *Sealed* Mediator whom God hath *Sealed* and sent unto you for salvation, there is not any thing in the world that will one day more torment you then your refusall of him; O that we should ever live to heare of salvation so freely offered and of a Saviour so authorized, yet notwithstanding that we should respect our sinnes more then our soules, and because we could not have him to bee our Saviour except wee came under his governement, and bee ruled by him as a King, we refused him wholy altogether: Indeed if we might have had salvation by him and the for-

forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and withall have remained under the rule and ſway of our owne luſts and beene led by them, we would have beeene contented to have had him, but rather then we would leave our blaſphemous, our uncleane, inujurious and covetous courſes of life, wee were content to let Chriſt goe if hee would; O that we ſhould reject this *Sealed* Saviour, O that we ſhould refuſe ſalvation offered on ſuch loving termes, when God was ſo loving as to Seale and authorize his Sonne, when the Sonne was ſo loving as to give himſelfe when he was *Sealed*, to refuſe this and that for ſuch baſe reſpects, will certainely one day when the conſcience is wakened, proove the greateſt torment that can be.

See how the Apoſtle notably enforceth this in the ſecond of the *Hebrewes*, *if ſo be they did not eſcape that deſpiſed* Moſes *Law*, *How ſhall we eſcape if wee neglect ſo great ſalvation?* hee doth not ſay how ſhall we eſcape if we oppoſe Chriſt, if we raile on him, if wee deſpiſe his Image in his children, as many curſed wretches doe, but how ſhall we eſcape if we doe but neglect ſo great ſalvation, ſo witneſſed and authorized with all the ſignes, ſo offered and tendered with all the termes of love that may be.

And therfore if there be any heere that have lived in ſinfull courſes, and have a purpoſe to breake them off, that are weary of the government of their luſts and of Satan that rules them by their luſts (for all are under one governe-

ment or other, either under the *Sealed* governement of Christ, or under the base governement of Satan that tends to damnation) O leave it, and come under this Governour *Sealed* by God the Father, authorized from Heaven by the blessed Trinity, by miracles, and by all the arguments that can be, come under his blessed governement, and you shall doe well, God the Father, the partie offended with your sinnes, he hath *Sealed* him, and he cannot refuse a Mediator of his owne Sealing.

And doe not say your sinnes have beene thus and thus, for consider what were these parties that he offers himselfe to heere, that he saith to, *Labour for the meate that endures to everlasting life*, were they not cursed Hypocrites that followed him for the loaves, and yet he saith to them, *Labour for the meate that endures*, &c. I am *Sealed* even for your salvation, if you will come out of your hypocrisie and be ruled by me; therefore let none stand out from comming under the governement of Christ, for hee offers mercy (you see heere) to the worst of men, even to cursed hypocrites.

And (to conclude with a word of comfort) if there be any poore distressed soule frighted in conscience with the sight of his sinnes and Satans temptations, O let such consider the love of God in Christ: Satan pictures out God as a terrible Judge, and so he is indeed to men that goe on in their sinnes, a consuming fire: but art thou weary of thy courses, art thou willing to

come

come under a better covenant, let not Satan abuſe thee by ſetting God before thee as a terrible Judge, and Chriſt as one that would not ſave thee; no, come in, kiſſe the Son, *for him hath the Father Sealed*, *Sealed* for thee if thou bee weary of thy ſinnes, inforce not upon thy ſoule any unwillingneſſe to be in God, wherefore doth God ſtoope ſo low, and labour by all theſe arguments heere, as that Chriſt is the Sonne of man, and that hee ſhall give it you, and that the Father hath *Sealed* him for that end, wherefore is all this, but to ſhew his willingneſſe to receive thee? wherefore hath the Father *Sealed* Chriſt but in love to thee? Come in therefore, and then if you will ſeale to this truth, if you will beleeve, and caſt your ſelves on Gods gratious promiſe even againſt doubting and diſtruſt, you ſhall finde God ſealing you by his Spirit, you ſhall finde his Spirit witneſſing to your ſpirits that you are the ſonnes of God.

Heere then you ſee is ſure footing for poore doubting ſoules to faſten upon, God the Father, the party offended, hath *Sealed* his Sonne, hath authorized him to ſave thee, if thou repent and come in; what are all thy ſins and unworthineſſe to Chriſt, God-man, *Sealed* and authorized by the Father who is the partie offended? if thou art willing to come in, bring all thy ſins and oppoſe them to Chriſt God-man *Sealed* by the Father and they will vaniſh as a cloud. But (as I ſaid before) if thou wilt not come in and accept

accept of this Saviour, if thou wilt not ſubmit thy ſelfe to his governement, thou ſealeſt thy damnation.

Thus you ſee I have unfolded this bleſſed portion of Scripture, Chriſt Jeſus and all the prerogatives and benefits that come by him, is the food that endureth to everlaſting life: you ſee the arguments our bleſſed Saviour uſeth to enforce us to Labour after this food, it is food, it is food that endures, & it is food that endures to everlaſting life, and he will give it, for him the Father hath *Sealed* and authorized ſo to do, he is both the gift and the giver, both the food and the inviter to the food, both the Prieſt and the Sacrifice. Labour therefore after this food.

There is an objection which I will briefely anſwer and ſo end.

Labour after it, why? Chriſt will give it, if he will give it why muſt wee labour after it? and if we muſt labour for it, how doth he give it? how can theſe two, guift, and labour ſtand together?

I anſwer, very well, Chriſt will give himſelfe and forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and life everlaſting, and yet we muſt labour too: But wee muſt know for what we muſt labour, we muſt not labour for any merit to the title unto Heaven and happineſſe, Chriſt indeed gives that; But labour in the uſe of all good meanes to get knowledge and faith to receive this gift, to get the knowledge of Chriſt, what he is in his natures and offices, what he hath promiſed, what

he

he hath done and what he hath ſuffered, what the intent of the Goſpell is, what the Giver is, and what the authority is that his Father hath given him, this requires labour, it is a labour to crack the ſhell, to underſtand the letter of the Scripture, to know what the gift and what the giver is. And it is likewiſe a labour to get faith to receive this gift, to get the ſoule emptied of all ſelfe-confidence, of all worth in it ſelfe and in the creature, for Chriſt muſt bee received with a beggars hand, and it will aske much labour to deny a mans ſelfe, for proud fleſh will alwaies have ſomewhat to truſt to either in it ſelfe or in the creature.

So that theſe two may well ſtand together, labour and gift: we are taught to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*, God will give us our daily bread, we muſt not therefore ſtand ſtill and doe nothing, but though God will give it, yet he will give it in the uſe of meanes, in the uſe of our lawfull callings, ſo heere, God will give us this ſpirituall food, yet he will give it in labour, it is his ordinance, and whatſoever hee gives, he gives not in idleneſſe but in obedience to his ordinance, he will have us to labour in the uſe of the meanes, in reading, hearing, receiving the Sacrament, praying, meditating and the like, to have a part in Chriſt this bleſſed gift Nay, becauſe he will give Chriſt, therefore labour, the one enforceth the other, the like reaſon *Moſes* giveth the *Iſraelites*, *Fight* (ſaith he) *for the Lord hath given them into your hand*, they might

might ſay, if our enemies bee given into our hand why ſhould we fight? yes, fight the rather, be incouraged to fight, becauſe you ſhall be ſure to conquer, ſo heere, *Labour for the meate that endures to everlaſting life, for the Sonne of man will give it*, therefore labour, becauſe he will give it, in labouring we ſhall bee ſure to have it, do that which belongs to thee and thou ſhalt be ſure to have that which belongs to God, thou ſhalt finde Chriſt, and Heaven, and glory, and all in the uſe of the meanes: But he gives nothing without labour; there can be no good done in earthly things without labour, and doe you thinke to have Heaven without labour? No, ſpirituall things are againſt the ſtreame, Heaven is up the hill, there muſt be labour, there muſt be ſtriving againſt corruptions within and againſt temptations without, and our labour it is a happy labour, it is not a barren labour, *our labour is not in vaine in the Lord*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, wee that labour for the food that endures to everlaſting life, we labour for ſomewhat, but worldlings that beate their braines, and tire their ſpirits, and rack their conſciences, and weare out their bodies, it is all for nothing, it is for that which is *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*, for that which they muſt leave behind them. A true Chriſtian (to encourage him to take all the paines that may be) hee labours for ſomething, it is a hopefull and not a barren labour: And (beloved) bleſſed are we that we can have this food for our labour, that

1 Cor. 15. 58

ſince

since the fall wee can recover by the second *Adam* a better estate then wee had by the first.

And our blessed Saviour to the end he might distinguish true Christians from Hypocrites, enjoynes this duty of labouring so much the more, for we have many in the Church that thinke to have Christ and his benefits without labour, as if Heaven would drop into their mouthes, they can say that God is mercifull, and Christ died for us, but you shall in the meane time finde them careless of reading, of hearing, of praying, of the Communion of Saints, *&c.* are idle in working out their salvation with feare and trembling, negligent in selling all that they have for the Pearle, will part with nothing for Christ, I say to distinguish these Hypocrites from true Christians, therefore he saith, *Labour*, to shew to us that onely they that labour for Christ in the use of all good meanes, that labour for the true knowledge of him and for faith to receive him, that sell all for him, that take paines to grow in grace and in union with Christ, that make him their best portion in the world, and delight in him, it is they onely that have interest in Christ, onely the painefull Christian is the true Christian.

Therefore I beseech you, as you would have it discerned that you are not Hypocrites in the Church, bee stirred up to use all sanctified meanes to know Christ, to beleeve in him, to know that you are in a communion with him, that

that you belong unto him. Be not discouraged, you shall have rest ere long, *There is a rest for the people of God*, as the Apostle saith to the *Hebrewes*. Indeed so long as we are heere below there is labour joyned with wearinesse, for we have great conflicts with corruptions and temptations, with enemies within, and enemies without, but be of good comfort we shall at last come to a rest, to a rest perpetuall and everlasting: It is true, in Heaven there shall be labour, for we shall be alway praising God, but it shall be labour without wearinesse, labour without conflict, there shall bee no corruption within, nor no divell without, Satan could enter into Paradice below, but hee shall never enter into that heavenly Paradice, therfore be incouraged to labour for a while, though it be tedious, because of corruptions and temptations, *yet there is a rest for the people of God*, an eternall Rest.

Heb. 4.

FINIS.

VIOLENCE VICTORIOVS:

In two Sermons,

By the late Reverend and Learned Divine RICHARD SIBS,

Doctor in Divinity, Master of Katherine Hall in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher at *Grayes-Inne*.

GEN. 32. 26.
I will not let thee goe except thou blesse mee.

1 COR. 15. 57.
Thankes be unto God which giveth us the victory through Iesus Christ our Lord.



LONDON,
Printed by *G. M.* for *Nicholas Bourne* and *Rapha Harford*,
1639.

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VIOLENCE VICTORIOVS.

MAT. 11. 12.

From the daies of Iohn Baptiſt untill now the Kingdome of Heaven ſuffereth violence and the violent take it by force.

IOHN *Baptiſt* and our bleſſed Saviour gave mutuall teſtimonies one of another, hee witneſſed of Chriſt before hee came, and our Saviour Chriſt gives witneſſe of him here. The occaſion of this you have in the ſecond verſe: *Iohn* being in priſon ſends two of his Diſciples to Chriſt, to know whether he were the Chriſt or no; not that *Iohn* did doubt, but to confirme his Diſciples. Chriſt returnes a reall and a verball anſwer, *Tell Iohn* (ſaith he) *what ye have ſeene and heard*, &c. and then he cloſeth

Occaſion of the words.

closeth up all, *Blessed is he that is not offended with me.* Upon this occasion Christ enters into a commendation of blessed S^t. *Iohn Baptist*, even unto a comparative commendation, amongst them that were borne of woemen there had not yet risen a greater then *Iohn* the *Baptist*, not so much in eminency of grace (though that may have a truth) as in regard of the dispensation of his Ministery, *Iohn* living in more glorious times: For the excellency of the Church is from Christ: he doth ennoble and advance times and places and persons, *Bethlehem*, a little Citty, yet not a little Citty in regard that Christ was borne there, and saith Christ, *Happy are the eyes that see that which your eyes see*, every thing is advanced by Christ. So *Iohn Baptist* in regard of his office, being the immediate fore-runner of Christ, was greater then all that were before him: yet he saith the least in the *Kingdome of Heaven is greater then he*, not in grace, but in prerogative, in regard of the revelation and manifestation of more things. For *Iohn Baptist* died before he saw the death and resurrection and ascention of Christ accomplished, before he was glorified. Therefore in regard of these prerogatives, the least in the Kingdome of Heaven, that is, in the Church of the New Testament is greater then he. It is a rule that the least of the greater, is greater then the greatest of the lesse. *Iohn* was greater then the greatest of them that were before him; but lesser then the least of those that were after him.

1 *From the excellency of his ministry.*

Luk. 10 23.

Then

Then Christ commends *Iohn* from the efficacie of his Ministery, *From the daies of Iohn Baptist untill now the Kingdome of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*; so you see how the words depend upon the former. For the points wee are to consider in them.

2. *From the efficacie of his Ministery.*

First, here you have the state of the Church in the New Testament, (It is a Kingdome, and the Kingdome of Heaven) together with the quality of the meanes whereby it comes to be a Kingdome, the meanes of grace, the Gospell. The Gospell and the people that are wrought on by the Gospell in the New Testament, they are both called the Kingdome of Heaven.

Then secondly, here is set downe the affection of those people that seeke this Kingdome at that time, and so forward to the end of the world; the disposition of the persons is, *they are violent.*

The third is, the issue or successe of this eagernesse and violence; though the manner be violent, yet the successe is good, *the violent take it by force.*

The fourth is, the date or time when it begins, and how long it continues; it beares date from the preaching of Saint *Iohn Baptist* to the end of the world; *untill now*, that is, to the end of the world, as it was said, *till now*, in the Evangelists time, so posterity may say *untill now*, from the first comming of Christ, till his

second comming, while there is a Gospell preached, which is the Ministerie of the Spirit, the Spirit will bee working, and there are such glorious things in the Gospell, that there will bee violence offered, so while there is a people to bee gathered, and a Gospell to be preached to gather them, and a Spirit that workes by that Gospell, there will be violence in the Church offered to the meanes of salvation.

Doct. 1. *The Church the Kingdome of Heaven.*

First, *The state of the Church, together with the meanes, the Gospell preached, it is called The Kingdome of Heaven.*

Besides others, there are three maine significations of these words, *The Kingdome of Heaven.*

Threefold signification of the Kingdome of Heaven.

1. *Heaven.*

First, the famous, leading, proper signification is the state, and place where God himselfe, and his people are most glorious, *The Kingdome of Heaven*; all the other significations end in that. But secondly, because all that shall come into that glorious Kingdome, they must bee Kings here first in the state of the kingdome of grace, which consists *in righteousnesse, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, in the graces and comforts of the Spirit, therefore the state of grace comes to have the name too of *The Kingdome of Heaven*. And thirdly, because grace in this world cannot be attained without an order, and meanes, and dispensation from God; hereupon, the dispensation of the meanes whereby we come to have grace is also called *The Kingdome*. The unfolding the mysteries of salvation

2. *State of grace.*

3. *Meanes of grace*

ſalvation in the Goſpell, is called the Kingdome of God. As Chriſt ſaith, *The Kingdome of God ſhall bee taken from you*, that is, the preaching of the Goſpell, therefore *the Goſpell* is called *the Goſpell of the Kingdome*, and *the Word of the Kingdome*, becauſe by this Word wee come to have grace, and by grace, glory; there is no glory without grace, and no grace without the Word, one makes way for another. The preaching of the Goſpell doth cauſe a Church (which is the Kingdome of Chriſt) wherein hee rules by the Scepter of his Word, by which Word, Chriſt and all his riches, and glory, and prerogatives are unfolded, and thereby grace is wrought, and grace leades to glory. This connexion and ſubordination is to bee obſerved.

1. *A ground of conviction.*

Firſt, for the conviction of thoſe who doe not indeed belong to the Kingdome of Heaven; every man is ready to talke of the Kingdome of Heaven, and the glory there; I but there is a ſubordination of grace, and of the meanes of grace; how ſtandeſt thou affected to the meanes of ſalvation, to the *Word of the Kingdome, the Word of life, The Word of reconciliation?* for it hath the name from all the excellencies to which it brings us, to ſhew, that as we valew life, a Kingdome, reconciliation, and all that is good, ſo we muſt valew this Goſpell, or elſe it is a preſumptuous confidence; if the priviledges of grace and glory belong to us, wee muſt come to them by theſe ſteps; thoſe that

regard not the Gospell and meanes of salvation, they have nothing to do with grace nor glory, they are hereby convinced of arrogant folly.

2. *Of comfort.*

Againe, it is a ground to comfort weake Christians that regard the meanes of salvation, and yet feare their falling away; be of good comfort whosoever thou art, God hath knit and linked these together, all the power of earth and hell cannot breake one linke of this chaine; conscionable attending upon the meanes and grace and glory will go together. Therefore hold on, attend upon the meanes of salvation, and waite with comfort; The Gospell of the Kingdome will bring thee to grace, and grace (though it be but *an earnest*, but a little measure) will bring thee to glory. Where God hath begun a good worke he will finish it, he will second one benefit with another, diligent attending on the meanes with grace, and grace with glory.

In Scripture, works have their denomination from that they aime at, as the Apostle saith, *Yee have crucified the old man*, and *yee are crucified with Christ*, because yee are in doing it, and ye shall do it perfectly; so we are Saints, because wee shall be so; we are Kings now, because we are in part so, and we shall be so fully hereafter; so grace is called the Kingdome of Heaven, because it is the undoubted way to the Kingdome of Heaven and glory. God would helpe our faith by the very title, for wee are not elected to the beginnings onely of glory,

glory, but to the perfection, as it is excellently ſet downe, *Epheſ.*1. *We are elected to glory by meanes and beginnings*; therefore undoubtedly we may hope for the accompliſhment when we ſee the beginnings.

Queſt. Why is the ſtate of grace and the meanes of grace and glory it ſelfe called *the Kingdome of Heaven?*

Anſw. Becauſe they are all of and from Heaven, the one is in Heaven the Kingdome of glory, and the other the Kingdome of the Word here, and truth and grace which are by it are from Heaven, the truth we have and grace from that truth come from Heaven, yea and Chriſt the Author of all is from Heaven and they all leade to Heaven.

Anſw. Why grace and the meanes of it are called the Kingdome of Heaven

Which ſhould teach us with what minds to converſe in the hearing and reading of theſe things, with heavenly affections. And it ſhewes likewiſe why worldlings and baſe people are no more affected with the things of the Goſpell, becauſe it is *the Kingdome of Heaven*. If it were of the world we ſhould have it ſought with eagerneſſe enough, though it were a leſſe matter then a Kingdome: but it is a *Kingdome of Heaven* remote from fleſh and blood, there muſt be a new Spirit to worke a new ſight and a new taſte, to worke a change in the heart of man, and then he ſhall know the things of *the Kingdome of Heaven*. He muſt come out of the world that will ſee this Kingdome, as in *Reve.* 18. *Come out of Babylon*. A man muſt come out

Why the things of the Goſpell are ſlighted.

out of *Antichriſts Kingdome*, to ſee the baſeneſſe of it, he cannot ſee it in the middeſt of it, ſo we muſt come out of the world if we would ſee the glorious Kingdome of Chriſt, it is a heavenly Kingdome. Therefore the greateſt potentates of the world muſt abaſe themſelves, there is no greatneſſe in the world can helpe them to this heavenly Kingdome.

Queſt. But why ſhould the Goſpell and the ſtate of the Church in the New Teſtament bee called the Kingdome of Heaven and receive the date now; was it not the Kingdome of Heaven before?

Anſw. I anſwer, it is the manner of the Scripture to give titles to things from the glorious manifeſtation of them, things are ſaid to bee when they are gloriouſly manifeſted. The Myſtery of Chriſt is ſaid to be revealed now in the time of the Goſpell, it was knowne before to *Adam* and *Abraham* and the reſt: but now there was a more apparent glorious manifeſtation of it, therefore now the manifeſtation of Chriſt and the good things by him, they are called a *Kingdome*; before it was kept incloſed in the pale of the Iewiſh Church, it was vailed under Types, it was hid in promiſes that were darke and obſcure, but when Chriſt came, all was taken off and Chriſt was unvailed. It is ſaid in the Goſpell, *The Holy Ghoſt was not given yet, becauſe Ieſus was not yet glorified.* The Holy Ghoſt was given before, but not ſo fully

Iohn 7.39.

and

and plentifully: So there was a ſtate of Heaven before men were ſaved, before the comming of Chriſt: But it was not called *the Kingdome of Heaven*, it was not a ſtate of liberty and freedome from the bondage of ceremonies, *&c.*

And there is reaſon that there ſhould be violence offred to this ſtate and meanes, and grace wrought by it, it is a Kingdome: it is no great wonder that a Kingdome ſhould ſuffer violence, eſpecially ſuch a Kingdome as the *Kingdome of Heaven.* What is in a Kingdome?

In a Kingdome there is

1. *Freedome.*

There is firſt of all freedome from ſlavery and danger, a Kingdome is an independent ſtate, there is none above it, he that is a King is free, independent and ſupreame.

2. *Plenty.*

Then againe a Kingdome is a full ſtate, there is aboundance and plenty of people and good things in a Kingdome.

3. *Glory.*

Againe, in a Kingdome there is glory and excellency: (where is it to be had elſe?) all the glory and ſufficiency and contentment that Earth can afford.

Now in that the ſtate of the Church by reaſon of the glorious Goſpell is called a Kingdome. Firſt it is a free ſtate: as indeed the *Word doth make us free* from former bondage. In particular the Goſpell of Chriſt it frees us from Jewiſh bondage, and from all kind of bondage ſpirituall. *If the Sonne make you free yee are free indeed.* A Chriſtian is above all, he is over ſin and Satan and the Law, he is free & ſupreame and independent all are under him. A Chriſtian

Iohn 8.36.

as

as a Christian, he is under none but Christ, under no creature. *The spirituall man judgeth all things, yet hee himselfe is judged of no man.* I speake not of civill differences: But as a Christian is a member of Christ, and a citizen of the Kingdome of Heaven, he hath a kind of independent state, his conscience is onely subject to God and Christ; but all earthly things he commands, they are under him.

1 Cor. 2. 15.

Christianity a full state.

And 2. the state of a Christian is a full state: God is his, Christ is his, *All things are his*, so much as shall serve to bring him to Heaven; that which is truly good is directly his, and indirectly all other things are made his by Christ, who hath the authority and power and strength of a King to command all things to worke together for his good: death and sinne and all that befalls him are thus his. And then he hath a spirit of contentment in the want of good and of patience in the suffering of ill, that he *can doe all things* (as St. *Paul* saith) *through Christ that strengtheneth him.* What he wants in outward things, he can fetch supply from the promises of the Gospell, he can fetch supply from Christ, and from the state to come, and what he wants in other things he hath in grace which is better.

1 Cor 3. 21.

Phil. 4. 13.

A state of glory

3. It is a state likewise of glory and excellency: but it is a spirituall glory, and therefore it consists together with outward baseneſſe and meaneneſſe, it is a glorious state to be the *Sonne of God*, to be *heires of Heaven*, heires of all things

things in Christ, by the Spirit of Christ in him he rules over all. How glorious is the Spirit of God in a Christian in the time of temptation and affliction, when he hath a Spirit ruling in him, that is stronger then the world and all oppositions whatsoever? The state of a Christian is glorious even in this world in the beginnings of it. What then is the glory that is to be revealed on the Sonnes of God *in the day of revelation?* It cannot enter into our thoughts, it is above our expression, nay it is above our imagination and conceit; Thus you see there is great cause why *the Kingdome of Heaven should suffer violence.* When Crownes and Kingdomes are laid open to people with hope of getting them, especially such a one as *the Kingdome of Heaven* is, it is no wonder if there be *violence* offered to get them.

1 Iohn 4. 4.

Rom. 2. 5.

The next thing is the affection of those that seeke after this *Kingdome*, it is violent.

The Kingdome of Heaven suffereth violence.

How doth the *Kingdome of Heaven*, the Gospell and meanes of grace *suffer violence*.

First, because when these good things were revealed by *Iohn Baptist* and then by Christ, and after by the Disciples and Apostles, many thronged into *the Church*, which is the gate *of the Kingdome of Heaven*: they all pressed to be of the Church, to heare the Word of God. They hung as it were upon the word of Christ; upon

I. *In regard of the multitude.*

Luk.12.1. Mat.3.5. upon his mouth; they preſſed ſo, that *they trod one upon another*; and it is ſaid they all came out to heare *Iohn Baptiſt, Ieruſalem and all Iudea and all the region round about Iordan*, ſo that in regard of the multitude there was violence.

2. *In regard of the affection.* And then in regard of their affections, their zeale to the good things of the Goſpell was eager, and earneſt: To be Citizens of a Kingdome, to partake of the meanes of ſalvation, to come to grace, and ſo to glory, it made them wondrous violent.

3. *The perſons which were* 1. *Sinners.* In regard likewiſe of the perſons, *the Kingdome of Heaven ſuffered violence*, the perſons being ſuch as might be judged to have no right unto it. Alas for poore wretched ſinfull men and woemen, that had beene notorious ſinners to come to receive a Kingdome, to become Kings, this was ſtrange. What had ſinners to doe with grace? This doctrine was not heard of in the Law, that there ſhould be hope for ſuch wretched perſons as theſe, if ſuch might be admitted ſurely there muſt needs bee great violence.

2. *Poore.* Luk.7.22. Then again, they were poore and meane people, *The poore receive the Goſpell*; for beggars to become Kings, poore men, that were advantaged by their outward abaſement to come to ſpirituall poverty.

3. *Strangers.* Mat.8.12. Againe, they were Gentiles, *Alients from the common-wealth of Iſraell and ſtrangers from the Covenant of promiſe*, Heathen people. *The Iewes were the children of the Kingdome*, the Gentiles

tiles were forreiners and ſtrangers; now for theſe to come in, and *the children of the kingdome* to be ſhut out, it muſt needs ſuppoſe violence; where there is no apparant right, there is force. Now what right had the Gentiles (that were little better then dogs) could they have any thing to doe with the kingdome? I ſaith Chriſt, they take it by violence, and the Jewes, and the proud Scribes and Phariſees that ſeeme to be the apparant *children of the kingdome ſhall at length be ſhut out. They that were firſt* (in outward prerogatives) *ſhall bee laſt, and they that were laſt* (the Gentiles, ſinners, meane people that take the advantage of their baſeneſſe, and ſinnefullneſſe, to ſee their unworthineſſe, and to magnifie the grace of God in Chriſt) *ſhall bee firſt.* In theſe reſpects *the Kingdome of Heaven* is ſaid *to ſuffer violence.* People will to Heaven what ever come of it, when theſe good things are diſcovered they will have no nay. Hence wee may learne this,

Mat. 20. 16.

That it is the diſpoſition of thoſe that are the true members of the Church of God to be eager and violent.

Doct. *The diſpoſition of Chriſtians eager and violent.*

Thoſe that intend to enter into the Kingdome, they muſt throng, and ſtrive to enter; and when they are in, they muſt keepe the fort, and keepe it with violence.

There is indeed a violence of iniquity and injuſtice, and ſo the people of God of all others ought not to be a violent people; *Doe violence*

Ob.

to

to no man, saith the Baptist to the souldiers, *Luke* 3.14. violence rather debars out of the kingdome of Heaven, then is any qualification for it: But this is another manner of violence which our Saviour here speakes of, necessary for all that desire to enter into the Kingdome of Heaven, and that for these reasons.

Answ.

Grounds of this violence.

1. *Opposition.*

Psal. 110. 2.

First, betwixt us and the blessed state wee aime at there is much opposition, and therefore there must be violence. The state of the Church here, the state of grace, and the enjoying of the meanes of grace it is a state of opposition. Good persons, and good things, they are opposed in the world. Christ rules in this world *in the middest of his enemies*, hee must have enemies therefore to rule in the middest of, he must bee opposed, and where there is opposition betweene us and the good things that wee must of necessity have, wee must breake thorough the opposition, which cannot bee done without violence. Now the meanes, and graces of salvation they are opposed every way, within us, and without us.

From the flesh.

1. They are opposed from within us, and that is the worst opposition: for Satan hath a partie within us that holds correspondencie with him, our owne traiterous flesh; in all the degrees of salvation there is violence hence; in effectuall calling, when we are called out of the kingdome of Satan, he is not willing to let us goe, hee would keepe us there still, and when we come to have our sinnes forgiven in justi-

justification, there is opposition, proud flesh and bloud will not yeeld to the righteousnesse of the Gospell; it will not rest in Christ, it will seeke somewhat in it selfe. In Sanctification there is opposition betweene *the flesh* and *the Spirit*: every good worke wee doe, it is gotten out of the fire (as it were) it is gotten by violence, in every good action, whether it be to get grace, or to give thanks to God, how many carnall reasonings are there? If a man be to give to others, the flesh suggests, I may want my selfe. If he be to reforme abuses in others, he is ready to thinke, others will have somewhat to say to me, and I shall be offencive to such and such men. And then the affection to earthly things chaines us to the things below, and selfe-love prompts a man to sleepe in a whole skinne; we love our wealth, and peace, and favour with men, so that a man cannot come to the state of grace without breaking through these, and hereupon comes the necessity of violence from the opposition from within us, wee must offer violence to our selves, to our owne reason, to our owne wills and affections, *You have not yet resisted unto blood*, saith the Apostle; wee doe not resist by killing others, but we our selves resist to death, when rather then we will misse of Heaven, and happinesse, and rather then we will not stand for the truth we will suffer death. Heb. 12. 4.

2. Againe there is opposition from the world, on the right hand, by the snares and delights *From the world*

lights of the world, to quench the delight in the good things of the Spirit, and on the left hand, by feares, and terrors, and ſcandalls to ſcare us from doing what we ought to doe.

From Satan.

3. And then there is oppoſition from Satan in every good action, he beſets us in prayer with diſtracted thoughts, and in every duty, for hee knowes they tend to the ruine of him and of his Kingdome. There is no good action but it is oppoſed from within us, and without us; the meanes of ſalvation, and the attending on them, they are not without ſlander and diſgrace in the world. God will have this violence therefore, becauſe there is oppoſition to the meanes, to the attendance on them, to grace, to every good action, to every thing that is ſpiritually good.

God ſeemes an enemy.

Nay, ſometimes God himſelfe becomes a perſonated enemie, in ſpirituall deſertions he ſeemes to forſake and leave us, and not onely to forſake us, but to be an enemy, *to write bitter things againſt us*, and that is a heavie temptation.

Iob 13.26.

2. *To difference true Chriſtians from others.*

Againe, God will have this violence, and ſtriving, as a character of difference, to ſhew who are baſtard profeſſors, and who are not, who will goe to the price of Chriſtianity, and who will not. If men will goe to Heaven they muſt be violent, they muſt be at the coſt and charges, ſometimes to venture life it ſelfe and whatſoever is deare and pretious in the world. A man muſt be ſo violent, that hee

muſt

muſt goe thorough all, even death it ſelfe, (though it be a bloudie death) to Chriſt; this diſcards all luke-warme, carnall profeſſors, who ſhake off this violence; in all eſtates of the Church it is almoſt equally difficult to bee a ſound Chriſtian; for God requires this violence even in the moſt peaceable times. Now the truth and religion are countenanced by the lawes, yet the power of it is by many much oppoſed. Therefore hee now that in ſpight of reproach, in ſpight of ſlander will beare the ſcornes caſt upon the Goſpell, that will *goe with Chriſt without the gate, bearing his reproach*, ſuch a man may be ſaid to be thus violent; it is an eaſie thing to have ſo much Chriſtianity as will ſtand with our commodity, or with pleaſure, *&c.* but to have ſo much as will bring us to Heaven (I ſay) it is equally hard in all times of the Church, it requires violence to carry us thorough theſe leſſer oppoſitions. Heb. 13. 13.

3. *To ſet a higher price on this Kingdome.*

Againe, God will have us get theſe things with violence, that we may ſet a greater price on them when we have them; when we have things that are gotten by violence, that are gotten hardly, O we valew them much, Heaven is Heaven then, things that are hardly gotten, and hardly kept, are highly prized.

4. *The excellencie of the things.*

Againe, the excellencie of the thing inforceth violence; it is fit that excellent things ſhould have anſwerable affections. Now it being a Kingdome, and the Kingdome of

Heaven, what affection is answerable but a violent strong affection?

5. *The necessity.* Againe, together with the excellencie, the necessity requires it; for the Kingdome of Heaven, it is a place of refuge, as well as a Kingdome to inrich us. There were Cities of refuge among the Jewes, when a man was followed by the avenger of blood, he would run as fast as he could to the Citie of refuge and there he was safe, so when a guilty conscience pursues us, when there is a noise of feare in the heart, when Gods judgements awaken us, & hell is open, when a man apprehends his estate, and is convinced what a one he is, and what he deserves, of necessity he will flie to the Citie of refuge, and where is that, but in the *Kingdome of Heaven*, in the Church? happie is he that can but get in at the gate of this Kingdome, there is no doubt of his going in further; but there must be a striving *to enter in at the gate*, and then there he shall be hid in his Sanctuary; as the pursued Doves, get into their nests, and the Connies hide them in the rock, when they get that over their heads then they are safe: so a Christian, when he is pursued with conscience, and with the temptations of Satan, he flies to his Sanctuary, doe you wonder that a guilty man should flee to his sanctuary, and the pursued creatures to their hold and refuge? In this respect *the Kingdome of Heaven suffereth violence.*

Luke 13.24.

Herein it is compared to some great rich Citie

Citie that hath ſome great treaſure and riches in it, and it muſt be beſieged, and beleagured a long time, and thoſe that can enter into it they are made for ever. Or it is like the entrance or gate of a Citie where there is ſtriving and thronging, and where beſides enemies are, that if men ſtrive not, they are cut, and mangled, and killed, ſo it is in the ſtate of this Kingdome, when a mans eyes be opened, he ſees the divell, and hell behind him, and either he muſt enter or be damned, and being entered, it makes him rich, and advanceth him for ever; ſo he is ſtrongly mooved to offer violence on both ſides: if he looke behind him there is the kingdome of Satan, darkneſſe, and miſery, and damnation, (for as *Pharaoh* purſued the *Iſraelites* when they were got out of his kingdome, ſo the divell purſues a man when he is broken out of his dominion) And then before him there is the kingdome of happineſſe and glory, the feare of that that followes them, and the hope of that that is ſet before them, both make them ſtrive to enter into the gate of that Citie.

What ſhould this teach us?

Vſe
To judge of our eſtates by our violence.

Firſt, let it be a rule of tryall to know, & judge of our eſtate, whether we be entred into this gate of Heaven or no? our lives are very ſhort, very uncertaine; let us conſider if we be in the way to Heaven; what ſtriving, what ſtrugling, what violence have we ever offered? There are a company that regard not the meanes of

ſalvation at all, either in private or publique. Some come to the Word, and heare, but they doe not heare it as the Word of God, to bee ruled by it, but as a diſcourſe to delight themſelves for the time, to have matter to ſpeake of, and to cenſure, not with a ſpirit of obedience to be guided by it as the Scepter of the Kingdome. What violence is this, now and then to heare a Sermon, now and then to reade a Chapter, now and then to utter a yawning prayer betweene ſleeping and waking, perhaps when thou knoweſt not what thy ſelfe ſaiſt? how then wouldeſt thou have God to regard it? What violence is in the lives of moſt Chriſtians, what ſtrength to enforce good actions, how doe they improove the meanes of ſalvation? many meanes are wholy neglected: ſome perhaps they uſe that may ſtand with their convenience now and then, whereas there muſt be an univerſall care of all the meanes, there cannot one be neglected without the loſſe of grace; and there muſt be attendance on them with violence. There is none of the meanes can profit us without rouzing, and ſtirring up our ſpirits; we cannot heare, nor pray, without drawing up, and raiſing up our ſoules; the fleſh will ſtop the comfortable performance of any action elſe, and Satan will kill them in the very birth if he can.

Men violent for outward things.

To ſearch a little deeper, doe but compare your courſes toward theſe good things of Heaven, with your courſes towards the world.

If

If there be hope of preferment, the doores of great men are ſure to ſuffer violence with favourites. The Courts of juſtice ſuffer violence, to have our right in earthly things. The ſtages, and ſuch places are thronged, and ſuffer violence. If a man could but over-looke the courſes of men abroad in the Citie, he ſhould ſee one violent for his pleaſures running to the houſe of the Harlot *as a foole to the ſtocks.* Pro.7.22. Another to the exchange to increaſe his eſtate. Another to the place of juſtice, to detract his neighbour, or to get his owne right, perhaps neglecting his title to Heaven in the meane time. Another to the Court to get favour to riſe to ſome place of preferment. Theſe places ſuffer violence: but what violence doth the poore Goſpell indure? Alas, it is ſleighted, and men will regard that when they can ſpare time, &c. It is not regarded according to the worth and valew of it; if ever wee looke to have good by the Goſpell, our diſpoſitions muſt be violent in ſome proportion anſwerable to the excellency of it.

Heavenly things offer violence to us

Alas we may juſtly turne the complaint on our ſelves, that whileſt we ſpend our ſtrength in violence about the baſe and meane things of this life, the Kingdome of Heaven it offereth violence to us, and yet we will none of it. How doth God beſeech us in the Miniſtery, *Wee beſeech you to bee reconciled,* and *Why will yee die O houſe of Iſrael?* As if the Goſpell and grace were commodities that God were 2 Cor. 5.20. Ezek. 18.31.

weary off, he comes and puts them upon us whether we will or no, and yet we refuse them, we are so farre from offering violence to the Gospell and to grace, that God offers violence to us, as if we should doe him a favour to receive the Gospell and to doe good to our owne soules, and yet the vile, proud, base heart of man will not regard and receive these heavenly things. How will it justifie Gods sentence at the day of judgement, when hee shall alleadge there was a discovery of such things unto you, and instead of violence in seeking them, you sleighted and neglected them? Nay; there is a worse sort of men then these, those that oppose the *Kingdome of Heaven* in the meanes of it, in the persons of it, what kinde of men are these, thinke you?

What violence may stand with wisedome.

Againe, we see here that there is a blessed violence that may stand with judgement. A man cannot be violent and wise in the things of this world, because the things are meane, and eagernesse is above the proportion of them. A man cannot be violent after honour, or riches, and be as he should be; these are things that he must leave behind him and they are worse then himselfe: much lesse after filthy pleasures can a man be violent and wise, a man *must become a foole in this respect*, as the Scripture saith. But in respect of heavenly things a man may be violent and wise: for there is such a degree of excellency in the things, that no violence can be too much. Men talke of being too strict

1 Cor 3. 18.

and

and too holy: Can there be too much of that which wee can never have enough of in this world? I speake it the rather to confound the base judgement that the world hath of a holy disposition, which is carried with a sweet, eager violence to these things. They are thought to be franticke, to be out of their wits, as they thought S^t. *Paul* was; but he answers, *If wee be out of our wits, besides our selves, it is to God.* 2 Cor. 5. 13. Christ himselfe was sometimes laid hands on, as if he had beene out of himselfe, and as *Festus* told blessed S^t. *Paul, That much learning had made him mad,* when he saw him eager in the cause of Christ. So many, when they see a man earnest in the matters of God, they thinke surely these men have lost their discretion: No it is the highest discretion in the world to be eager and violent for things that are invaluable, and if men be not eager for these, they are fooles, they know not how to prize things, the most judicious men here are most violent, so that it be violence that hath eyes in its head, violence guided with judgement from the knowledge of the excellency of the good things in the Gospell, I speake of such a violence as that.

Not to heed idle reproaches.

Away then with base reproaches, let us not be affrighted with the ill reports of idle braines and rotten hearts of people, that know not the things that belong to the *Kingdome of Heaven.* Alas they know not what they say, they are to be pitied and not censured. Is there any

thing that a man should be earnest for, if not for these things? Were our soules made to pursue things that are earthly and base, worse then our selves? Were our wits made onely to plod in our temporall, and to neglect our heavenly calling? If any thing may challenge the best of our indeavours, the marrow of our labours, the utmost of our spirits and wits, certainely it is these, grace and glory that will stand by us, when all things will faile us. Therfore let not your owne hearts besot you, nor the vaine speeches of others affright you. It will be acknowledged by every one ere long, that there is nothing worth a mans eagernesse but these things. The worldling is violent and eager, *he troubleth himselfe* and his house *about a vaine shadow*, for pleasures and profit, *&c.* and what comes of all his violence? He is turned naked into his grave and thence into Hell, and there is an end of all the violence about all other things besides these.

The dispositiō of true professors

We see then the disposition of true professors, they are violent in respect of heavenly things. Those therefore that are not earnest in the cause of Religion when the state of things requires it; they have no Religion in them, they are not in the state of grace. We must be earnest first of all against our owne sinnes: Violence must begin there, to subdue all to the Spirit of Christ, to suffer nothing else to rule there; and after that, violence to maintaine the cause of Christ. *To contend earnestly for*

the Faith once delivered to the Saints, to contend with both hands, not to ſuffer it to be wreſted from us or to be betraied, and if it be oppoſed to vindicate it: we muſt be violent both to propagate the truth of God, and in caſe of oppoſition to vindicate it, *He that is not with me* (ſaith Chriſt) *is againſt me.* If a man be not with Chriſt, he is againſt him: it may ſeeme a ſtrange ſpeech, but Chriſt cannot abide luke-warme neuters, he cannot abide *nullifidians,* he cannot indure cold perſons, his ſtomacke cannot brooke them, *he will caſt them up,* as he ſaith, *Reve.3.15, 16. I would thou wert hot or cold.* A man had better be nothing in Religion then be luke-warme. The reaſon is, if a man will have good by any Religion he muſt be earneſt in it. *If Baal be God ſtand for him, if you would have good by him, if the Lord bee God ſtand for him,* be earneſt in his cauſe: if Popery be good then ſtand for that, if you hope for good by it, and if our Religion be good, then ſtand for that, if you hope for good by it. There is no good received by Religion, if wee be not earneſt for it, Religion is not a matter to be dallied in.

Mat.12.30.

1 King.18. 21.

Newters hatefull to Chriſt.

Therefore they are bitter, ſowre, profane ſcoffing Atheiſts, that triſle with Religion, as if it were no great matter what it bee. They will bee earneſt in all things elſe, earneſt to ſcrape riches to ſatisfie their baſe luſts: but for Religion it is no matter what it be, it is a thing not worthy the ſeeking after, the

the old Religion or the new or both or none. Theſe are perſons to be taken heed off, breeding a temper oppoſite to Religion more then any other, Chriſt can leaſt brooke them: there is great reaſon for it; who can brooke any favour to be neglected and ſleighted? Eſpecially for theſe excellent things to be under-valued and ſleighted, it canno be that God can indure it. There will be a faction in the world while the world ſtands, Chriſt and *Antichriſt*, Good and evill, light and darkeneſſe, but a man cannot be of both, he muſt ſhew himſelfe of one ſide or other in caſe of oppoſition. Therefore the temper of the true poteſſor is to be earneſt in caſe of oppoſition of Religion, and in caſe of opportuninity to advance his Religion; in civill converſation and dealing with men that are ſubject to infirmities, he muſt be gentle and meeke. *The Spirit of God deſcended in the ſhape of a Dove* upon Chriſt, as well as *in fiery tongues* upon the Apoſtles. But in the cauſe of Chriſt, in the cauſe of Religion, he muſt be fiery and fervent. No man more mild in his owne cauſe then *Moſes*, he was a meeke man: but when occaſion ſerved, when God was offended, downe he throwes the Tables of ſtone, he forgate himſelfe, though he were the meekeſt man in the world otherwiſe in his owne matters: So I ſay the Spirit is both meeke and gentle as a *Dove*, and earneſt and zealous and hot as fire. In *Acts.* 2, The Spirit of God comes downe as a *mighty winde*. The winde is

Mat. 3. 16. Act. 2. 3.

Exo. 32. 19.

a powerfull thing, if it be in a mans body. There is no torment like to windy ſickneſſes, as their complaints witneſſe well enough that feele them: and if a little winde be incloſed in the earth it ſhakes the whole vaſt body of the earth. The Spirit is like winde, it makes men bold, it fills them with a great deale of eagerneſſe in the cauſe of God. Againe, the Spirit appeared to the Apoſtles in the likeneſſe of fire, it inflamed their zeale and made them fervent that were cold before; as we ſee in *Peter*, the voice of a damſell terrified and affrighted him, but when the Spirit came upon him, it ſo fiered him that he accounted it his glory (*Act.* 5.41.) *to ſuffer any thing for the cauſe of Chriſt.* Therefore thoſe that hope for any thing by religion, let them labour to be for that Religion in good earneſt, they ſhall finde God in good earneſt with them elſe. Mat. 16. 69, 70

Againe, hence we ſee that Religion takes not away the earneſtneſſe of the affections, it doth direct them to better things, it changeth them in regard of the object, It takes not away any thing in us, but turnes the ſtreame another way; Violence requires the height and ſtrength of the affections: Religion taketh them not away, but turnes them that way that they ſhould goe. If a ſtreame runne violently one way, if it be derived by skill and cunning another way, it will runne as faſt that way when it is turned as it did before. So it is with the heart of man: Religion takes nothing away

Religion taketh not away, but ordereth the affections.

way that is good, but lifts it up, it elevateth and advanceth it to better objects. There are riches and honours and pleasures when a man is in Christ: but they are in a higher kinde, therefore they draw affections and greater affections then other things: but these affections are purified, they runne in a better, in a cleaner channell: whereas before they ran amaine to earthly, dirty things below, the same affections (of love, of desire and zeale) doe remaine still, he that was violent before is as violent still, onely the streame is turned: For example take St. *Paul* for an instance, he was as earnest when he was a Christian as before, he was never more eager after the shedding of the blood of Christians and breathing out slaughter against them, as he was afterwards in breathing after the Salvation of Gods people and a desire to enlarge the Gospell. *Zaccheus* was never so covetous of the world before, as he was covetous of Heaven when he became a Christian. I say Religion takes not away any thing, onely it turnes the streame: But it is a miracle for the streame to be turned, it was God that turned *Iordan*: so it is a greater work then man can doe to turne the streames of mans affections that runne amaine to earthly things, to make them runne upward, it is onely Gods worke. This is the excellency of Religion, it ennobles our nature, that which is naturall it makes it heavenly and spirituall, that a man shall be as earnest for God and good things as ever

ever he was before after the things of this life. So much for that point.

The third thing is the ſucceſſe. *The ſucceſſe of this violence*

The violent take it by force.

The earneſtneſſe of affection, and violence, it is ſucceſſefull, *they take it.* The good things of God, they are here compared to a Fort, or to a well fenced and well armed Citie ſtrengthened with bulwarks and munition, that is a long time beſieged, and at length is taken; for this clauſe, *The violent take it by force,* it doth as well ſhew the iſſue of theſe violent ones ſtriving for the Kingdome of Heaven, to wit, that they doe at length take it, as the manner how it is taken, namely, by force. *The violent, and onely the violent, and all the violent, doe at length certainely obtaine what they ſtrive for, the Kingdome of Heaven.* *Doct.*

Why? 1. Becauſe it is promiſed to the violent, *Knock and it ſhall bee opened unto you, Bee zealous, and repent,* (that is the meanes to cure all former tranſgreſſions, *repent, and bee zealous, and doe the former workes*) and *To him that overcommeth,* (that is, he that is earneſt, that will never leave off till he hath overcome) *to him will I grant to ſit with me on the throne,* and *To him that overcommeth will I give to eate of the tree of life;* all the promiſes are to him that overcomes, to him that is zealous and earneſt. I. *The violent have promiſes.* Mat. 7. 7. Rev. 3. 19, 21. Rev. 2. 7.

Then

2. *They have a victorious spirit.*

Then againe, the spirit whereby a man is earnest, is a victorious spirit, as Christians have the Word and promise to build on, that leades them on, and incourageth them: so they are led by a mighty Spirit, that hath the force of winde and fire, that beates downe all before it, that breakes thorough all oppositions, and difficulties, being lead with a divine Spirit, what earthly thing can oppose that which is divine? it brings under, and subdues all; therfore the violent take it, the Spirit of God seizing upon, and possessing the heart, and carrying it with strength after these things.

3. *God hath set Heaven at this rate.*

And then onely the violent take it, because God hath set it at this rate, *he that heareth, and doth, he that perseveres to the end, he that sells all for the pearle,* for the treasure in the field, there must be nothing retained, all must bee parted with, we must be at any cost, and charge, and perill, and all little enough; it is offered to us upon these termes of parting with all, of induring any thing, of breaking thorough all difficulties; onely such, and all such shall obtaine it by force.

4. *The violent onely can prize it.*

And againe, onely the violent, because onely they can prize it when they have it. They onely can prize grace, and Heaven, they know how they come by it, it cost them their pleasures, and profits, it cost them labour, and danger, and losse of favour with men, and this paines, & cost, & losse, it indeares the state of grace, and glory to them: for God will never bring any man to Heaven,

Heaven, till he have raiſed his affections to that pitch to value grace and glory above all things in the world. Therefore onely thoſe ſhall take it by violence; for onely thoſe ſhew that they ſet a right price on the beſt things, they weigh them in the ballance of the Sanctuary, they value things as God would have them valued.

But, is not the Kingdome of Heaven, and grace free? therefore what needs violence to a thing that is free, and freely offered? *Ob.*

I anſwer, becauſe it is free, therefore it is violently taken: for alas, if it were offered to us upon condition of our exact performing of the Law, it might dampe the ſpirits of men, as indeed uſually ſuch if they be not better informed, they end their daies in deſpaire: but being freely offered, *The Publicans and Harlots* (ſaith Chriſt) *goe into the Kingdome of God before the proud Phariſees*; becauſe it is free, it is free to ſinners that feele the burthen of their ſins: *Come unto mee all yee that are weary and heavie laden, &c.* Mat. 11.28. *Bleſſed are the poore in ſpirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of Heaven. Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe, they ſhall be ſatisfied.* Mat. 5.3,6. Thereupon he that hath a guilty conſcience, he makes haſte, and offers violence, when he heares of free pardon. What makes the condition of the divels ſo deſperate? There is no hope of free pardon to them, what makes men ſo eagerly to imbrace the Goſpell notwithſtanding their ſinnes? Becauſe it is free-

Anſw. *Freedome of grace inforceth violence.*

ly

ly offered. Thereupon it was that the Gentiles were so glad of it, that had beene sinners and under Satans Kingdome before, and that makes miserable persons (that are humbled with afflictions and abasement in the world) glad of it; it being so great a thing, the Kingdome of Heaven, the favour of God, and freedome from misery, and so freely offered. It is so farre from hindring violence because it is free, that therefore the humble afflicted soules that desire grace are the more eager after it. The proud Pharisees thought the Kingdome of Heaven belonged only to them; and therefore they despised Christ, and despised the Gospell, because it was propounded to sinners, and to such meane persons that they thought were viler then themselves: but now when the meaner sort of people, and others that were abased with crosses in the world saw what a kinde of Gospell it was; what great matters were offered, and that it was offered freely; they justified wisedome, and the counsell of God which others despised, and pressed for it with violence.

Mat 11.19. Luke 7.29,30

Holy violence hopefull.

It is little comfort to heare of the excellency, and the necessity of these heavenly things, if there were not hope of them. Hope stirres up diligence and indeavour in the things of this world; what makes men adventure to the *Indies*, east and west? They hope for a voyage that shall inrich them all their life; hope in doubtfull things stirres up industrie. What

I. *Hope stirres up diligence.*

makes

makes the poore husbandman diligent to plow and to sow? the hope that he shall have a harvest; yet this is under a providence that may guide it another way. But spirituall things are more certaine, therfore hope in spirituall things must needs stirre up indeavour, we need not call them into question. And as it stirres up to diligence, so it stirres up in the use of the meanes, not to give over till we see our hopes accomplished. Then in the third place hope of successe, that wee shall not loose our labour, it inables and strengtheneth us to beare the tediousnesse of the time, and the incombrance of afflictions, and whatsoever is betweene us and the thing wee expect, though wee have not that comfort from God that we would have, yet it makes us waite upon God.

2. *To use meanes constantly.*

3. *To waite.*

Therefore when hee saith, *the violent take it by force*, it is to incourage us, the violent, eager, strong indeavours of a Christian in the waies of God, in the meanes of salvation, they are no successeleese indeavours.

Christians indeavours successefull.

He labours for that he knowes he shall have, his violence is not in vaine; he that is violent in good things hath a promise, hee that wrastleth with God shall overcome, and he that overcommeth shall have a crowne, here is a promise to build on: therfore here is incouragement to bee earnest and violent, he shall overcome, hee shall enter the Castle at the

last, if he continue striving and give not over. Hence there is a difference to be observed betweene the indeavours of a Christian and of three sorts of other men.

Difference betweene the indeavours of a Christian, and

I. *Enemies of the Gospell.*

First of all, if those only that offer violence to the Kingdome of Heaven, that set on it with incouragement, shall get it and that by force, what a great difference then is betweene them, and those that in a contrary way offer violence to the Kingdome of Heaven, that is, those that wrong Christ in his members, and hinder the meanes of salvation, what promise have they to speed? Surely they have no promise nor hope at all, onely their malice carries them amaine in spight; becaus the Gospell reveales their hollownesse, and hypocrisie to all men, and forceth upon them a necessity to be other men then they list to be for the present, therefore they are eager in hating the Gospell. There are threatnings enough against such as are violent against the Gospell, they are violent in vaine, for *they kicke against the prickes*; they run themselves against a stone wall, and they shall dash themselves against it. *Those that have ill will to Sion shall perish*, there is *one sits in Heaven that laughs* all their attempts *to scorne*. A Christian hath comfort in his indeavours; there is hope of good successe though there be inward and outward opposition, he shall prevaile. Those that are enemies have nothing but discouragement, *they shall bee as grasse on the house top*, that no man blesseth

Acts 9 5.

Psal. 2. 4

Psal. 129. 6, &c

bleſſeth but is curſed of every one, no man beſtowes a good word on them, it is a fruitleſſe indeavour, they are under a curſe.

2. *Worldly men.*

Againe, it ſhewes us how to judge of the courſes of other men, that are violent in other courſes about the world. A Chriſtian he takes his Kingdome at the laſt and injoyes it for ever: but thoſe that are violent for the world after pleaſures, after baſer things then themſelves, alas when they have it, they have but a ſhadow and they become ſhadowes in imbracing it: Vanity imbraceth vanity and how ſoone are they ſtripped of all. If a man by violence ſcrape a great eſtate, he muſt leave it ſhortly; here he found it, and here he muſt leave it in ſpight of his heart ere long; and *all is but vanity* in the cenſure of him that knew all things the beſt of any man; even *Salomon*, that had gone thorow the variety of all things. And oft times they miſſe of that they labour for, *They doe not roſt that they get in hunting*; they hunt after preferment and after riches, but oft times they doe not enjoy them, and if they doe, they get the curſe of God with them and ere long they are ſtripped of all; but here is that that may ſtrengthen our indeavours, *The Kingdome of Heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it*, it is not an indeavour that is loſt.

Pro. 12. 27.

3. *Sluggiſh Chriſtians.*

Then againe, this ſhewes that the ſtate of true Chriſtians is different from the ſtate of perſons that are carried to good things, but not violently,

violently; *The violent take it*, he ſurprizeth the city at the laſt, he laies his ſiege and will not remoove till death, he will not give over till he have it, he will have it or he will dye in the buſineſſe, and ſo at laſt he obtaines his deſire. The ſluggiſh careleſſe man he goes a little way. As *Agrippa* ſaid to *Paul*, *he was almoſt perſwaded to be a Chriſtian*, ſo it is with ſuch men, in ſome things they will be Chriſtians, but there they are at a ſtand, they will go no farther, and ſo all they have done is to no purpoſe, *The ſluggard deſireth and wiſheth, but his ſoule hath nothing*. A ſluggiſh, cold, lazie Chriſtian he looſeth all his paines. If a man be to goe ten miles, and goe but nine, and there ſit downe, he ſhall never come to his journies end. If a man will give but 7 or 8. ſhillings for that which is worth 10. he ſhall goe without it. Grace and Glory are ſet at this price, there is required ſuch ſtrength of labour and indeavour and violence: therefore without this a man ſhall never attaine it, unleſſe he ſtretch himſelfe to ſuch a pitch, *He ſhall never come to the end of his Faith, the ſalvation of his ſoule, to the high calling of God in Chriſt Ieſus. The ſluggard wiſheth and gets nothing*, the reaſon is, becauſe he is a ſluggard, becauſe he will not ſtrive, but the ſtriver gets the fort and hath all in it, and is a man made for ever.

Act 26.28.

Pro.13 4.

1 Pet.1.9.

Pro.26.26.

The ſluggard thinkes himſelfe wiſer then many men that can give a reaſon. The ſluggiſh diſcreete Chriſtian, I warrant you he hath reaſons for

for what he doth. It is not good to be too earneſt, it will incurre the disfavour of ſuch a man or ſuch a man, I ſhall bee accounted ſo and ſo for my paines: But a wiſe man he ſeeth the excellency of the things, and he knowes that his courſes and his conſcience will juſtifie him at the laſt, and therefore he goes on what ever comes of it.

The preciouſnes of the things require violence.

God is not ſo weary of theſe precious things, theſe precious jewels of grace and glory, as to force them upon us. Is *the Kingdome of Heaven* ſuch a ſleight thing, that it ſhould be obtruded to us whether we will or no? Shall we thinke to have it when our hearts tell us wee eſteeme other things better? No; there are none ever come to Heaven but their hearts are wrought to ſuch an admiration of grace and glory, that they undervalue all things to it: therefore there is no hope for any to obtaine it, but he that takes it by violence. We ſee *Moſes* eſteemed the baſeſt thing in the Church better then the greateſt excellencies in the world that men are ſo violent after, he eſteemed the very afflictions of Gods people better then the treaſures and pleaſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon, nay then the pleaſures of a Court. When men ſhall eſteeme the baſe things of the world, above all the treaſures of Heaven, above the ſtate of Chriſtianity, they have no hope of comming there: they may pretend God is mercifull and Chriſt dyed, *&c.* I but whoſoever he brings to ſalvation, he workes

ſuch a ſence of miſery in them and ſuch an apprehenſion of grace and of the meanes of grace that there is an undervaluing of all other things. God will not bring them to Heaven that ſhall not glorifie him when they come there, and how ſhall they glorifie him here, or there when they value the world and theſe baſe things that they muſt leave behind them more then the things of Heaven? This is the reaſon that few are ſaved, becauſe they content themſelves with eaſie, dull and drowſie performances, and never conſider with what proportion they are carried to things: when they had rather looſe the advantage of that which will bring everlaſting good to their ſoules, then looſe the petty commodities of this world and yet think themſelves good Chriſtians, what a deluſion is this? It is the violent only that are ſucceſſefull, *they take it by force.*

Ob. I but what if the oppoſition grow more and more.

Anſw. *Grace increaſeth with oppoſition.* Then the grace of God and courage will grow and increaſe more and more; As *Luther* ſaid well, the more violent the adverſaries were the more free and bold was he. So the more the enemies rage the more the ſpirit of grace growes in Gods people, it inceraſeth by oppoſition. As *Noahs Arke*, the higher the waters were, the nearer ſtill it was carried to Heaven. So we are nearer to God and nearer to the *Kingdome of Heaven*, the more oppoſition

oppoſition ſwells and rages, True courage growes with oppoſition. As the *Palme-tree* riſeth up againſt the burden that preſſeth it downe: ſo the divine ſpirit being a heavenly thing, and all oppoſition below of the Divell and divelliſh minded men being but earthly, what are they to the divine Spirit which ſets us on and encourageth us? They cannot quell it, but the Spirit growes more and more in oppoſition. The Apoſtles they ran all from Chriſt when he was to be crucified, they had but a little meaſure of the Spirit, but when the Holy Ghoſt was ſhed more plentifully on them, they beganne to ſtand couragiouſly for the cauſe of Chriſt when there was more oppoſition; the Spirit grew more and more, till they ſealed the Truth with their blood. Therefore though oppoſition of enemies and their fury and rage grow: let us know whoſe cauſe we mannage and with what aſſurance of ſucceſſe, the violent at length *ſhall take it by force*, Let us meditate upon this that ſucceſſe is tyed to violence: therefore when you pray to God, if he ſeeme to deny your requeſt, offer violence, wraſtle with him, let him not goe without a bleſſing, when he ſeemes to be an enemy, as ſometimes he doth, to try our ſtrength, we muſt uſe an holy violence; when we are dull and not fit to pray, nor fit for holy things, Let us ſtirre up the Spirit of God in us, and labour to get out of that eſtate, let us uſe violence and violence will overcome at the laſt. A man that hath

Exhortation to holy violence.

the Spirit of God gets the victory of whatsoever opposeth him. If there be snares offered from the world he withstands them, if Satan come with his temptations he resists him, he hath a promise for it, *resist the Divell and hee will flee.* Let us hold out and we shall get the victory and overcome even God himselfe, how much more all other things? Therefore when either opposition without or indisposition within sets upon us in the course of Religion and Piety, let us thinke here now is time and place for violence. I know if I set my selfe about it I shall have the victory and the Crowne. A Christian is alway in a hopefull state and condition, he hath somewhat to encourage him, he hath arguments to prevaile over the state of opposition, he knowes he shall winne all at last if he goe on, and that makes him couragious in what estate soever he is. Let us not be discouraged to heare of opposition. And let us be incouraged when we heare of good things, when we heare that the Kingdome of Heaven and grace is offered in the preaching of the Gospell. *Let us attend upon the posts of wisdomes doores*, and not give over *till we come to peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost.* If wee heare of comfort in the Word of God against distresse of conscience, let us never give over till we finde it. If we heare that God is *a God hearing Prayer*, let us never leave knocking at Heaven Gate, never leave wrastling till our prayers be heard, when we heare what ill is to be

Jam. 4.7.

Pro.8.34.
Rom.14.17.

be avoided, and what good is offered; let us not ceaſe till we avoid the one, and obtaine the other, *The violent take it by force.*

The laſt point is, the date of time from whence this Kingdome of Heaven ſuffereth violence. *The time when this violence began.*

From the daies of Iohn Baptiſt untill now.

Was there not a Kingdome of Heaven that ſuffered violence before *Iohn Baptiſts* time, did the Kingdome of God begin then, was Chriſt a King, and was Heaven opened onely then? *Queſt.*

I anſwer no, but now the things of God were more gloriouſly diſcovered; therefore *Iohn* 1. 51. *Henceforth you ſhall ſee Heaven opened.* The Kingdome of Heaven was opened now by the preaching of the Goſpell more gloriouſly then before. Therefore the ſtate of the Goſpell is called the *Kingdome of Heaven*, partly in regard of the times before, and partly in regard of the times after. *Anſw.*

The Law was full of ſervile bondage to Ceremonies, it was a heavie darke ſtate, they were laden with a multitude of Ceremonies, which were but cold things to the ſpirit of a man that deſires peace, though they were Ceremonies of Gods appointing, yet they were but outward empty things in compariſon, *weake and beggarly elements*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Gal.*4.9. They were coſtly, and paine-full, *Bondage of Ceremonies in the Law.*

full, and cold things, that had not the efficacie of ſpirit in them.

Iohns *preaching and living powerfull.*

And ſecondly, then it was entayled to the Jewes onely. Now ſince Chriſts time, it is enlarged, and being more large and free, this bleſſed eſtate is called *a Kingdome*, *Iohn Baptiſt* now opening Chriſt clearely, and a better ſtate then the Church had yet enjoyed, when people ſaw an end of the Ceremonies, and the beginning of the glorious liberty in Chriſt, this made them violently ſet on them.

Againe, *Iohn Baptiſt* made way for Chriſt, levelling the ſoules of men by his powerfull preaching, and his holy life; he taught them in what need they ſtood of Chriſt; hee was the meſſenger ſent before Chriſt for that end, he was as the morning Starre to the Sun, hee was powerfull in his preaching, and holy in his life, he told every man his owne: he told the Phariſees that they were a *generation of vipers*; he ſhewed men their ſtate by nature, and told them of a better ſtate, that *the Kingdome of Heaven was at hand*; and although he wrought no miracles, yet himſelfe was a miracle; to teach ſuch holy doctrine, and to live an auſtere holy life in thoſe evill daies, it was no leſſe then a miracle; therefore this violence to the Kingdome of Heaven it hath the date from *Iohn Baptiſts* time, from his preaching, not from his birth, he being ſo excellent a preacher, no wonder there ſhould be violence.

Mat. 3. 2.

This

Why the Gospell in Luthers *time was imbraced with violence.*

This shewes the reason why the Gospell in later times was imbraced so greedily, when *Luther* began to preach, alas people had beene in a worse condition then Jewish in respect of Ceremonies, and otherwise fooliſh idle men they will set God to schole, they will have some fooleries alway that they will make as much of as of the worship of God, and so it had beene in the times before *Luther*. In Saint *Austins* time, he was pestered with many vaine ceremonies, and good man he yeelded to the streame and custome in many things, though he could hardly indure the slavery of those things. Now when the times grew better, it was no wonder that the world imbraced the Gospell with violence; as in *Luthers* time, when there was a freedome proclaimed from those beggarly rudiments and traditions. Antichrist had hampered the consciences of men with an intollerable masse of fooliſh groundlesse ceremonies, making them equall with the Word of God, as wee see in the Counsell of *Trent*; and this vexed the consciences of people like scorpions, as it is *Rev.* 9.5. they oppressed the people with a multitude of weights and burthens, which when people could not assent unto, it stung their consciences. No wonder then if people thronged after *Luther* when he opened the doctrine of free justification by faith, that the consciences of men were not to be hampered with these things; He taught that Gods people were onely

only to have a few ceremonies for preſent order, but for the reſt, to trouble mens conſciences, and to make them of equall valew with the Word of God, he ſhewed it was an abhominable doctrine and wrote againſt it learnedly and ſweetly: and therefore it is no marvell though the truths he taught were ſoone and chearefully by multitudes embraced.

Why the Goſpell now is diſeſteemed.

And the reaſon why now the Goſpell begins to be ſo little imbraced and eſteemed, is becauſe, by reaſon of the long continuance of it, we are weary of this heavenly Manna. As the people in Saint *Iohn Baptiſts* time, as eager as they were after *Iohns* preaching, yet it was but for a time that they rejoyced in his light, they grew weary of him; we never felt the burthen of thoſe Romiſh Ceremonies, and therefore now grow weary of our liberty, whereas in the beginning of *Luthers* time, becauſe they were eaſed from many beggarly, and which is worſe, tyrannicall ceremonies of *Rome*, therefore with much joy and eagerneſſe they embraced the truth when it came to be preached amongſt them.

Iohn 5.35.

To be thankfull for liberty from Popiſh thraldome.

Therefore we are to praiſe God for the liberty of the Church at this time, that we have the Word of God to rule our conſciences, and that other matters are not preſſed on us but as matters of decencie and order. Alas if wee were in bondage to thoſe proud Popiſh wretches, our conſciences would be inthralled to a world of ſnares.

Laſt

Last of all, *From the daies of the Baptist* and so forward *the Kingodme of Heaven did suffer violence*, becauſe from that time forward the Spirit begā to be more plentifully given. Chriſt comes with his Spirit, which is the ſoule of our ſoule, and the life of our life, the Spirit it is like a mighty winde that mooves the ſhip in the water. The ſhip is becalmed it cannot moove unleſſe there be a winde, ſo the ſoule cannot moove to that which is good without the Spirit. Now there is more abundance of the Spirit ſince the comming of Chriſt. Chriſt who is the King of his Church, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, he reſerved the abundance of the Spirit till his owne comming, eſpecially till he entred into Heaven, then the Spirit came in abundance. *It was powred upō al fleſh*, it was but (as it were) dropped before, but then it was powred out. Then the Gentiles came in, and the Apoſtles received the Spirit in abundance, therefore no wonder that there was violence offered to the Kingdome of Heaven, then hence we may obſerve, Ioel 2. 28.

That the more clearely Chriſt, and the bleſſed myſteries of Chriſt are opened, the more effectuall the Spirit is, and the more heavenly men are, and more eagerly diſpoſed to ſpirituall things. *The Spirit effectuall in the Miniſtery of the Goſpell*

The reaſon and ground of it is in nature, the affections follow the diſcovery of the excellency of things. When firſt the neceſſity of being in Chriſt is laid open; that there are but two Kingdomes, the Kingdome of Chriſt, and the kingdome of the divell, and that a man muſt

must either enter into the Kingdome of Christ or bee of the Divells kingdome still.

2. *The excellency of Christs Kingdome.*

And when secondly together with the necessity, the excellencie of Christs Kingdome is discovered; that it is a state that will make us all Kings, a state wherein we shall at length overcome all opposition of hell, sinne, death, the wrath of God, that whereas earthly Kingdomes are opposed and inthralled, and one dash against another, the Kingdome of Heaven is a state that subdues all that is against it by little and little: (as Christ overcame death, and the wrath of his Father, and now rules in Heaven in his person, so all his members shall overcome all in time) when the excellencie of this Kingdome is laid open to the understandings of men, is it a wonder that their affections are set on fire, will any thing doe it more then such a Kingdome?

3. *Hope of obtaining it.*

Then in the third place, when it is hopefull too, when together with the necessity and excellency of it, there is assurance given us that we shall obtaine it if we strive for it, when it is offered freely, even grace and glory, and wee are intreated to receive grace, *Come unto mee yee that are weary*, &c. nay we are threatned if we doe not come, and we have example of the worst sort of people; of *Zaccheus*, and the poore woman out of whom the divels were cast, of *Peter* that denied Christ, of *Paul* that persecuted him, such as had beene wretched persons,

persons, that have come out of Satans kingdome, when these things are propounded, and understood, and apprehended, men that are in their wits, that are not besotted by the divell, men that are not in love with damnation, and hate their owne soules, they will imbrace them. When they see a state discovered in Christ wherein they are above Angels (in some sort) above death, and hell, that they triumph over all in Christ, that because it is as sure that they shall bee crowned Conquerors with Christ in Heaven as if they were there alreadie. When it is propounded thus hopefully, who would not offer violence to this Kingdome? When *Iohn Baptist* laid it open so clearely to them, *this is the Lambe of God that takes away the sinnes of the world*, it made them offer violence to it. Iohn 1.29.

And this is another reason why in the latter, the second spring of the Gospell, (for there was a Winter in the time of Popery, it being a Kingdome of darkenesse, keeping people in ignorance) so many nations so suddenly imbraced the truth; *Luther* was a man that was wondrously exercised and afflicted in conscience, this made him relish the doctrine of justification by grace in Christ, and thereupon to lay open the mysteries of Christ, and the bondage of Poperie; and this being once a foot, the peoples mindes being prepared out of the sence of their former bondage, whole kingdomes came in presently. As in the Spring time

time when there comes a fine Sunne-shine day, the prisoners are let loose out of the earth after a cold winter: So after the winter of affliction and persecution inward and outward came the Sunne-shine of the Gospell and made all come foorth and flourish presently. Wheresoever Christ is taught powerfully and plainely and the excellency, and necessity of the state we have by him, and that men may partake of it, if they be not false to their owne soules, there is alwaies violence offered to these things, because where the riches of Christ are opened, the Spirit goes with it, and goes with violence that it carries all before it.

Why Papists oppose preaching.

Hence againe, we may see that Popish spirits are witty in opposing the unfolding of the Gospell in the Ministery, especially where there is conscience and skill to unfold Christ plainely, they know when Christ is opened all their fopperies and inventions will grow base, the more Christ is unfolded, the more people will grow in hatred of *Antichrist*, the more they see the light, the more they will hate darkenesse, for this cause they oppose the unfolding of the Gospell to the understanding of the people, they would keepe people in ignorance that they may make them dote upon them. It argueth a disposition dangerous, that shall never taste of the good things of God, to be in a bitter temper against the unfolding of the Gospell of Christ: For we see here the discovery of it makes it wondrous effectuall, *Iohn Baptist* laying

laying open Christ clearer then he was discovered before, *the Kingdome of Heaven ſuffereth violence*.

How to get this holy violence.

Here we are inſtructed, what way we ſhould take if we would bring our ſelves or others into a temper fit for Heaven, to an earneſt temper after holy things, not to beginne with dead outward actions; but to beginne as becomes the condition of reaſonable men, as God deales with man, befitting the nature of man; beginne with the underſtanding. Let us meditate ſeriouſly of the truth of Chriſts comming in the fleſh, of the end of his comming, *To diſſolve the works of the Divell, to bring us out of the ſtate of nature to a better condition*, meditate of the excellency of the ſtate of grace, of the eternity and excellency of the ſtate of glory. Let us warme our hearts with theſe things, when a man hath once theſe things and believes them, let him be cold and dull if he can; And ſo if we would gaine others to a fit diſpoſition for Heaven, let us labour to inſtruct them what their ſtate by nature is, what Kingdome they are borne in, that they are liable to Hell and damnation, that they are under the poſſeſſion of the *ſtrong man*, the Divell, if the ſtronger man bring them not out and diſpoſſeſſe him; and let them know withall the infinite love and mercy of God in Chriſt, offering a better ſtate, giving the Goſpell and promiſing his Spirit with his truth, and if they belong to God this will worke upon them or elſe nothing will.

Other courses to punish men in their purse, or imprison them, or the like, may subdue them to outward conformity, but if we would bring their soules to Heaven, let us indeavour to enlighten their understandings to see the danger they are in, and to see the riches of grace and salvation that is proffered in Christ, and this will *compell them to come in*, *Luk.* 14. 23. there will be no need of any other compulsion, no more then there can be need to bid a man escape away that sees wild beasts about him, or to bid a guilty person to flee to the City of refuge and take hold of the Hornes of the Altar. Let *Iohn Baptist* come before Christ to make way for him, and presently *the Kingdome of Heaven suffers violence*, and after Christs time when the Spirit was more aboundantly given and the Gospell more clearely opened, the world stooped to the Gospell, the Gospell at length overcame the proud Scepter of the *Roman Empire*, they laid their Crownes downe before Christs Gospell: the Crosse of Christ gat above the Crowne in the preaching of the Gospell it was so powerfull. Thus if we would have the number of Heaven inlarged, let us desire that Gods truth may be opened plainly and powerfully. *Iohn Baptist* was a plaine and powerfull preacher, a man of a holy life, they al reverenced *Iohn* as a holy man, thereupon his doctrine came to be so effectuall: This is the way whereby God will doe good to those he delights in, For others that are bitter Atheists whom God hath

hath appointed to damnation, the Goſpell hardens them and makes them worſe. The *Phariſees* were the worſe by the preaching of Chriſt, when the Goſpell is preached, ſome are made worſe by it and maligne and perſecute it as farre as they dare, as the Apoſtle ſaith, God is glorified in the damnation of ſuch bitter oppoſers. We are not to looke to gaine all by preaching: thoſe that withſtand it are ſent by it with the more juſt damnation to Hell, but thoſe that doe belong to him are gained this way.

Let us labour therfore for a cleare manifeſtation of Chriſt, there is the treaſure of all goodneſſe in Chriſt, whatſoever is neceſſary to bring us to Heaven, and the more he is diſcovered and applied the more we are inriched with grace and comfort. Times of change may come, and if times of oppoſition and perſecution come not, yet temptations will come, and the houre of death will come, when we ſhall have occaſion to uſe all the ſtrength and comfort we have, and the more dangerous the times are, the more ſound and cleare knowledge of Chriſt we ſhould labour for, and that will breede this holy violence that ſhall break thorow all oppoſitions whatſoever.

FINIS.

THE CHVRCHES Complaint and Confidence.

In three Sermons,

By the late Reverend and Learned Divine RICHARD SIBS,

Doctor in Divinity, Master of Katherine Hall in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher at *Grayes-Inne*.

LAM. 1.20.

Behold O Lord for I am in distresse, my bowells are troubled, mine heart is turned within mee, for I have grievously rebelled, abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.



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THE CHARACHTERS

Complaint and Confidence.

In three Sermons,

By the late Reverend and Learned

Divine RICHARD BAXTER,

Doctor in Divinity, Master of Kimbolton Hall in Cambridge, and sometimes Preacher at Orpington.

LONDON,

THE CHVRCHES COMPLAINT AND Confidence.

ISAIAH 64.6,7,8.

But we are all as an uncleane thing, and all our righteousnesse are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leafe, and our iniquities like the winde have taken us away.

And there is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

But now O Lord thou art our Father, wee are the clay, and thou our potter, and wee are all the worke of thine hands.

THE words are part of a blessed forme of prayer, prescribed to the Church long before they were in captivity. It begins at the 15. verse of the former Chapter, *Looke downe from Heaven, behold from the habi-*

tation of thy holineſſe,&c. The bleſſed Prophet *Iſaiah*, was carried with the wings of Prophetical ſpirit over many yeares, and ſees the time to come, the time of the Captivity; and God by his Spirit doth direct them a Prayer, and this is part of the forme. For God in mercy to his people, as he foreſaw before what would become of them; ſo he vouchſafes them comfort before hand, and likewiſe he preſcribes a forme of prayer before hand. It is very uſefull to uſe formes; the 102. Pſalme, it is a forme of powring out the ſoule to God, when any man is in miſery, as you ſee in the Preface (but that by the way) Theſe verſes are a part of a forme preſcribed for the powring forth an afflicted ſoule, *We are all as an uncleane thing, and all our righteouſneſſe, &c.* The words they are,

Formes of prayer uſefull.

Diviſion of the words.

First, an humble confeſſion of ſinne.

And firſt of the ſinnes of their nature, of their perſons themſelves, *Wee are all as an uncleane thing.*

And then of the ſinnes of actions, *all our righteouſneſſe is as filthy rags.*

And then in the third place, a confeſſion of the ſinne of *non*-proficiencie, of obduration, and ſenceleſſeneſſe, that notwithſtanding the corrections of God, they were little the better, *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, or that ſtirres up himſelfe to take hold of thee.*

In the ſecond place there is an humble complaint of the miſerable eſtate they were in by their

their sinnes, *We all fade as a leafe, our iniquities like the winde have taken us away, thou hast hid thy face from us, and consumed us, because of our iniquities.* The complaint is set forth in these foure clauses.

And then an humble supplication, and deprecation to God, in verse 8. and so forward. *Now Lord thou art our Father, we are the clay, thou art the potter, we are all the worke of thy hands, &c.* These be the parcells of this portion of Scripture.

But we are all as an uncleane thing, &c.

Here is first an humble confession. And first observe in generall, what afflictions will doe, especially afflictions sanctified; that which all the Propheticall Sermons could not doe, that which all the threatnings could not doe, affliction now doth. Now when they were in captivity and base estate, they fall a humbling themselves. So the Prodigall, nothing could humble him but afflictions. *By the waters of Babilon we sate downe and wept*; all the denuntiations of judgements before they came to the waters of *Babylon* could not make them weepe. One affliction will doe more then twenty Sermons, when God teacheth and chastizeth too, when together with teaching there is correction, then it is effectuall. And this is the reason of Gods course, why when nothing else will doe, he humbles his people with afflictions; because

Benefit of afflictions.

Affliction removes the fuell of sinne.

becauſe hee cannot otherwiſe teach them.

Affliction withdrawes that which is the fuell of ſinne: for what doth our ſinnefull diſpoſition feed on? upon pleaſures, and vanities, upon the honours of this life, and riches, &c. Now when affliction either takes theſe things away, or imbitters them if we have them: then that which ſinne carried us to, and that we fed our owne baſe earthly luſts with, being gone, when a man is ſtripped of theſe, he begins to know himſelfe what he is; he was drunke before. I deeme a man in proſperity little better then drunke, he knowes neither God, nor himſelfe, nor the world, he knowes it not to be as a vaine world: he knowes not himſelfe to be vanity, to be an empty creature, except he conſiſt in God, and make his peace with him; he knowes not God to be ſuch a holy God, and ſuch an angry God for ſinne: but when affliction comes, and withdrawes, and ſtrips him of thoſe things that made him fierce againſt God, then he begins to know God, and to tremble at the judgements of God when he begins to ſmart: he begins to know himſelfe to be a mad man, and a foole, and a ſot; he did not know himſelfe before in his jollity: and then he knowes the world indeed as a vaine world. Bleſſed be that affliction that makes us know a gratious and good God, and the creature to be a vaine creature, and our ſelves out of the favour of God to be nothing. You ſee what afflictions will doe.

God

God doth use to breake men, as men use to breake horses, they ride them over hedge and ditch, and over plowed lands, uneven grounds, and gall them with the spurre, and with the bit, and all to make them tractable: and then afterward they ride them gently, and meekely, and rather so then otherwise. So God is faine to carrie his children over plowed lands, he is faine to breake them in their wickednesse, to bring their waies upon their heads, hee is faine to gall them, and humble them every kinde of way that they may carrie him; that he may bring their spirits under him, that he may leade them in the waies that leade to their owne comfort.

Vse Not to murmure at Gods hand.

Let us never murmure therefore at Gods hand, but willingly yeeld at the first: what doth a stubborne horse get, but the spurre, and stripes? and what doth a man get that stands out, when God comes to humble him by affliction, and inrends his good? nothing but more stripes. To come to the parts.

We are all as an uncleane thing, &c.

Heere first you see there is an humble confession. I will not inlarge my selfe in the point of humiliation; but speake a little because this is the day of humiliation, the occasion is for humiliation, all this is to bring us low, to humble us, to make us know our selves. Without humiliation Christ will never be

Humiliation necessarie.

be ſweete unto us, and the benefit of health, &c. will never be precious to us. I meane by humiliation when God humbles us, and we humble our ſelves, when we joyne with God, when Gods humbling of us, and our humbling of our ſelves goe together, then mercy is ſweet, and favour and protection is ſweete; when God powres his judgements on others, and ſpares us.

Kindes of humiliation.

Now humiliation, it is either reall, or inward, or verball.

Reall humiliation indeed, that is, our humbling our ſelves by faſting, eſpecially when it is joyned with reformation of our wicked waies, or elſe it is a mockery of God, as it is in *Iſaiah* 58. *to hang downe the head for a while*, and in the meane time to have a hard heart, to ſhut up our bowells to our brethren; but that is a reall kinde of humiliation when we thinke our ſelves unworthy of the creatures of meate or drinke, of any refreſhing: for this humiliation of faſting is a kinde of profeſſion (though we ſpeake not ſo) that we are unworthy of theſe things. But all is nothing, without inward humiliation of the ſoule; verball humiliation is in words (as we ſhall ſee after in confeſſion) and it muſt come from inward humiliation of ſpirit.

Vſe. To labour for humiliation.

Therefore (conſidering it is here the firſt diſpoſition of Gods people) let us labour to work upon our ſelves thoſe conſiderations that may make us humble, I will name a few.

Firſt,

First to bring our ſelves to the glaſſe of the Law, examine our ſelves how ſhort we have been of every Commandement.

Helps to humiliation.

1. *Conſider our obedience to the Law.*

But eſpecially bring our ſelves to the Goſpell; we hope to be ſaved by Chriſt: and have we mourned for our ſinnes *as one mourneth for his firſt borne?* Our ſinnes have wounded Chriſt. Have we preferred Chriſt in our thoughts above all the things in the world, have they all beene dung to us? Have we had that bleſſed eſteeme of the gratious promiſes of the Goſpell and the prerogatives therein ſet foorth, that they have been ſo precious to us, that we have undervalued all to them, as S. *Paul* did? A baſe eſteeme of the Goſpell is a great ſinne, *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation?* Put caſe we be not enemies to the Miniſtery and to holineſſe of life expreſſed in the Goſpell, as many curſed creatures are: yet a baſe eſteeme and undervaluing in our thoughts is a thing puniſheable; *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation?* Have we walked worthy of the dignity we are called to by the Goſpell? Have we carried our ſelves ſo in ſpirituall things, as to rule our baſe luſts? Have we been carefull of private Prayer, to offer our ſelves to God as Prieſts? Are we not preſſed in S. *Pauls* Epiſtles, *To carry our ſelves worthy of our profeſſion,* and have we done ſo? Let us bring our carriage and ſee how proportionable it is to Gods advancing of us in theſe glorious times of the

2. *To the Goſpell*

the Gospell and this will bring us on our knees.

We are ashamed of a little unkindnesse to men; But when we consider how unkind we have been to God, that thought not his deare Sonne and Heaven and happinesse too much for us; besides other favours that he protects and cloaths and feeds us every day, and yet we have not been answerable: these considerations would humble us proportionable to our carriage to men: Can we be ashamed to offer an unkindnesse to men, and are we not ashamed, cannot we be abased with this that we have carried our selves so towards God? It comes from Atheisme and infidelity of heart, that either we beleeve not these things to be good, or else that we haue not our part and portion in them, could we ever be so dead and dull hearted else?

3. *Call to mind our especiall sins.*

Againe, that we may be humbled, let us call to minde, now in this day of Humiliation, our speciall sinnes, we may soone know them, our consciences and our enemies will upbraid us for them, & we are loath to heare of them above all, either by the ministery or by our friends, we wish above al that the preacher would not speak of them & fret if he doe, and our hearts run upon them above all. So let us search our false hearts which way they runne: and now in the day of our abasement, let us thinke what would lie heavieſt on our conscience, if God should take us now with sickneſse or sudden death; let us thinke with our selves what is the sinne

that

that would afflict me most: that would stagger me most, that would shake my Faith most: whether it be filthinesse, or profanenesse, or swearing, or injustice, and whether have I made satisfaction or no: Let me examine, if God should strike me with his Arrow now, what sinne would rob me of my comfort and make me affraid to yeeld my soule to God. Now thinke of it, his is the way to be humbled: you may now bring your selves to consider of that that at other times you will not give your selves leasure to doe. What are daies of fasting for, but to give our selves leisure, that we may not thinke of meate and drinke and businesse? These daies should be daies of rest, that we may thinke of that that concernes our soules: take the advantage when thou rests from thinking of other businesse, thinke with thine owne soule what will lie heavieſt upon thy soule. This is required to Humiliation; this reall Humiliation that is outward, it is a protestation of the inward, and verbal Humiliation is but an expression of what we do inwardly.

There are two things wondrous necessary before the soule can be in the right frame it should be in.

First the soule must apprehend deepely what distance it hath from God, what alienates it from God before it can be wise: and it must be estranged from that before ever it can come to couple and joyne with God; when the soule apprehends what seperates it from God

God and conceives as it ſhould doe of that, then it will be the readier to apprehend God and then all duties will come off eaſily. Therfore let us firſt of all worke upon our owne ſoules to be humbled and by all the helps that can be.

4. *The uncertainty of life.*

And to helpe it, conſider now at this time, how uncertaine our life is, we know not who may be ſtricken next; and conſider what the dangerous iſſue is, if we humble not our ſelves here before God humble us in our graves. Let us helpe Humiliation by all that may be: For where this is all will follow eaſily: a man will goe out of himſelfe to God, when he is abaſed in himſelfe, and ſees no comfort in Heaven or Earth but in God; that there is nothing to be ſtucke to in the world, but all is vanity and he may be ſtripped of life and of all theſe comforts ere long; when a man is abaſed Faith and Obedience will come off eaſily. What is the reaſon that Chriſt is not reliſhed more? and that many fall off? They were never deepely humbled: according to the depth of Humiliation is the growth of holineſſe of life and the height of Faith. All graces riſe higher as the ſoule is more deeply humbled: The more we deſcend deeply in digging and rending up our hearts, the more the Word of God ſinks into the good ground that ſuffers the plow to rend it up and to cut off the weeds. The more deeply we are humbled, the more the fruits of Gods Word appeare in

our

our hearts and lives, the more fruitfull is our converſation: all comes indeed upon the truth of our Humiliation, and when that is not deep and true all the reſt is ſhallow and counterfit: there we ſhould worke it upon our owne hearts.

5. *To bee humbled in all the powers of the ſoule.*

And labour to be humble and low in all the powers of our ſoules; to have humble judgements, to thinke of our ſelves as God thinks of us. God thinks of us as ſinners, God and Chriſt thinke of us that we are ſuch as muſt deny all in us before we be fit for Heaven. Let us judge of our ſelves as he that muſt be our judge doth and will judge of us ere long, labour to have low judgements of our ſelves, what we are in our ſelves, empty of all good, defiled with all ill.

And this will breed poverty of ſpirit in our judgements. Then let us labour for Humility in our affections, to bring our ſelves more to God, to ſtoope to him in feare and reverence. And Humility in our obedience and converſations to God and to men every way, let Humility ſpread it ſelfe over all the parts and powers of the ſoule and body, and over our whole lives, I cannot ſtand further upon that.

Verball humiliation.

Now here is verball humiliation, that is by confeſſion, expreſſing our humiliation by our words, as the people of God doe here by confeſſion, laying open our ſinnes that God may cover them: what we hide God will never

Necessity of confession of sins.

cure: therefore we should take heed that now we are to deale with God, we lay open the bottome of our soules to him: let not the Iron be in the wound. You know a Chyrurgeon can heale nothing if the Iron or poisoned arrow sticke there. If there be corruption in the stomacke it must up, if it be ill gotten goods, it will not digest, up it must all to God: For men except there be scruples that a man cannot free his conscience, there is no necessity, though great conveniency: but betweene God and thy soule open all by confession, and give not over till thou hast brought pardon to thy heart of that sinne thou hast confessed. Every sleight confession is not enough, but it must be a resolved downe right confession without guile of spirit, as it is in *Psal.* 32. this is the course that *David* takes there; untill he dealt roundly with his soule without guile, *His moisture was as the drought of Summer*: he was in some dangerous disease that could not be cured. And doe we looke to be preserved from falling into sickenesse, or if we be sicke, to be cured? We must beginne the cure in our soules, lay open the wound to God, *I said I will confesse my sinne, and thou forgavest me*, he begins with confession. So all persons that either feare or are under any judgement, let them beginne with laying open their soules to God: when the soule is healed he will heale the body presently after: for he laies sickenesse upon the body for the soule, and when the

wound is healed, the plaister will fall off of it selfe; therefore let us lay open our sinnes by confession and shame our soules all that wee can.

This is the way to give glory to God, let us joyne both together, our owne ease and glory to God. When we have laid open our soules to God, and laid as much against our selves as the Divell could doe that way: for let us think what the Divell would lay to our charge at the houre of death, and the day of judgement; he would lay hard to our charge this and that, let us accuse our selves as he would, and as he will ere long: The more we accuse and judge our selves and set up a tribunall in our hearts, certainely there will follow an incredible ease. *Ionah* was cast into the Sea, and there was ease in the Ship, *Achan* was stoned, and the Plague was stayed: out with *Ionah*, out with *Achan* and there will follow ease and quiet in the soule presently; conscience will receive wonderfull ease. It must needs be so, for when God is honoured conscience is purified. God is honoured by confession of sinne every way. It honours his omniscience, that he is al-seeing, that he sees our sinnes and searcheth the hearts, our secrets are not hid from him. It honours his power, what makes us confesse our sinnes, but that we are afraid of his power least he should execute it? And what makes us confesse our sinnes? But that we know there is *mercy with him that he may be feared?* And

Confession of sin gives glory to God.

that there is pardon for ſinne, we would not confeſſe our ſinnes elſe, with men it is confeſſe and have execution, but with God confeſſe and have mercy, it is his owne proteſtation; we would never lay open our ſinnes but for mercy. So it honours God, and when he is honoured, he honours the ſoule with inward peace and tranquility. We can never have peace in our ſoules, till we have dealt roundly with our ſins and favour them not a whit; till we have ripened our confeſſion to be a thorow confeſſion. What is the difference betweene a Chriſtian & another man? Another perſon ſlubbers over his ſins, God is mercifull, & and he thinkes if he come to the Congregation and follow the Miniſter, it will ſerve the turne. But a Chriſtian knowes that Religion is another manner of matter, another kinde of worke then ſo: he muſt deale throughly and ſeriouſly, and lay open his ſinne as the chiefe enemy in the world, and labour to raiſe all the hatred he can againſt it, and make it the object of his bitter diſpleaſure, as being that that hath done him more hurt then all the world beſides, and ſo he confeſſeth it with all the aggravations of hatred and envy that he can.

But to come more particularly to the confeſſion here ſpoken off, *We all are as an uncleane thing*, &c.

We all.

We ſee here holy men themſelves confeſſe

feſſe their ſins and ranke themſelves among ſinners in their confeſſions, ſo we learne hence this,

That we in our confeſſions (in our Faſtings eſpecially) ought to ranke our ſelves amongſt the reſt of ſinners, and not to exempt our ſelves from other ſinners. Perhaps we are not guilty of ſome ſinnes that they have beene guilty off: God hath beene mercifull to us and kept us in obedience in ſome things: but alas there is none of us all but we have had a hand in the ſinnes of the times, the beſt of all conditions are guilty of them; therefore wee have cauſe to ranke our ſelves among others, as he ſaith here, *We are all as an uncleane thing*, and as *Daniell*, he makes a confeſſion of the ſins of all, we are all of us guilty.

Holy men in their confeſſions rank themſelve with others.

How are we all guilty?

We are all guilty in this reſpect, we receive ſome taint and ſoyle from the times we live in, either our zeale is weakned, we doe not grieve ſo much for the ſinnes of the times, and who is not guilty in this reſpect? We doe not grieve and lament as we ſhould: as S. *Paul* tels the *Corinthians*, they ſhould have beene ſorry and humbled; they were guilty of the ſinne of the inceſtuous perſon, becauſe they were not humbled for it. We are thus farre guilty at leaſt the beſt of us, that we doe not ſorrow for the common ſinnes. Alas how many ſinnes are there that every body may ſee in the times in all rancks? In Paſtors, what unfaithfullneſſe

The beſt men guilty of the ſins of the times.

1.

In not ſorrowing for them.

1 Cor. 5.

and in Governours and in places of justice; what crying of the poore and men oppressed; and in all rancks of people we see a generall security, we see filthinesse, and heare oaths, *for which the Land mournes*, as *Ieremy* saith, *Ier.* 23. These and such like sinnes provoke God and solicite the vengeance of God, and will have no nay till they have pulled downe vengeance; Who hath beene so much humbled for these sinnes as he ought? Perhaps our selves are not personally guilty of them: but are they not our sinnes so farre as we are not abased for them and oppose them, and represse them as we should in our places and standings, whether we be Ministers or Magistrates? Thus farre wee are guilty all, therefore the Prophet might well say, *We all are as an uncleane thing*, &c.

2. By Simpathie.

Then againe, there is a great Simpathy in the hearts of good men; they are full of pitty and compassion, and therefore they joyne themselves with others, partly knowing that they are guilty in some degree with others; and partly because they are members of the same body politike and ecclesiasticall, they live in the same Church and common-wealth, therefore all joyne their confession together, *wee all are as an uncleane thing*, &c.

Vse. To labour every one to bee humbled.

Let us make this use of it, every one of us to be humbled; doe not every one of us bring sticks to the common fire? Do we not adde something to the common judgement? If there be

be two malefactors that have committed a treſpaſſe, one of them is taken, and uſed in his kinde, he is executed, will it not greeve the other? he will thinke, was it not my caſe, I was a wretched ſinner as well as he. If there be divers Traitors, and the King is mercifull to one, and the other hee executes, will it not grieve him that is ſpared, if hee have any bowells or good nature? (beſides goodneſſe in other kindes) will hee not thinke, it was my owne caſe, there was no difference betweene me and them, only the mercy of the King? So the beſt of us may thinke, have I not a corrupt nature, and for the ſinnes of the times, am not I ſoyled with them? others have beene ſtricken, might not the ſame arrow have ſtricken mee? certainely this conſideration that we bring ſomthing to the publique ſinnes, it will make us humbled for the publique, as the Church here confeſſeth, *We are all as an uncleane thing*, &c.

To come to the particulars of the Confeſſion.

We are all as an uncleane thing.

Heere is a confeſſion of their perſons, their perſons were tainted; we are all a tainted ſeed and generation in nature, what the wickedeſt is wholy, the beſt are in part; therefore it is no error that wee ſhould ſay ſo and ſo of our ſelves in our confeſſions, as Saint *Paul* ſaith of him-

We are all tainted by nature.

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We are all tainted by nature.

that there is pardon for sinne, we would not confesse our sinnes else, with men it is confesse and have execution, but with God confesse and have mercy, it is his owne protestation; we would never lay open our sinnes but for mercy. So it honours God, and when he is honoured, he honours the soule with inward peace and tranquility. We can never have peace in our soules, till we have dealt roundly with our sins and favour them not a whit; till we have ripened our confession to be a thorow confession. What is the difference betweene a Christian & another man? Another person slubbers over his sins, God is mercifull, &c. and he thinkes if he come to the Congregation and follow the Minister, it will serve the turne. But a Christian knowes that Religion is another manner of matter, another kinde of worke then so: he must deale throughly and seriously, and lay open his sinne as the chiefe enemy in the world, and labour to raise all the hatred he can against it, and make it the object of his bitter displeasure, as being that that hath done him more hurt then all the world besides, and so he confesseth it with all the aggravations of hatred and envy that he can.

But to come more particularly to the confession here spoken off, *We all are as an uncleane thing*, &c.

We all.

We see here holy men themselves confesse

fesse their sins and ranke themselves among sinners in their confessions, so we learne hence this,

That we in our confessions (in our Fastings especially) ought to ranke our selves amongst the rest of sinners, and not to exempt our selves from other sinners. Perhaps we are not guilty of some sinnes that they have beene guilty off: God hath beene mercifull to us and kept us in obedience in some things: but alas there is none of us all but we have had a hand in the sinnes of the times, the best of all conditions are guilty of them; therefore wee have cause to ranke our selves among others, as he saith here, *We are all as an uncleane thing*, and as *Daniell*, he makes a confession of the sins of all, we are all of us guilty.

Holy men in their confessions rank themselve with others.

How are we all guilty?

We are all guilty in this respect, we receive some taint and soyle from the times we live in, either our zeale is weakned, we doe not grieve so much for the sinnes of the times, and who is not guilty in this respect? We doe not grieve and lament as we should: as S. *Paul* tels the *Corinthians*, they should have beene sorry and humbled; they were guilty of the sinne of the incestuous person, because they were not humbled for it. We are thus farre guilty at least the best of us, that we doe not sorrow for the common sinnes. Alas how many sinnes are there that every body may see in the times in all rancks? In Pastors, what unfaithfullnesse

The best men guilty of the sins of the times.

1.

In not sorrowing for them.

1 Cor. 5.

and in Governours and in places of justice; what crying of the poore and men oppressed; and in all rancks of people we see a generall security, we see filthinesse, and heare oaths, *for which the Land mourneth*, as *Ieremy* saith, *Ier.* 23. These and such like sinnes provoke God and solicite the vengeance of God, and will have no nay till they have pulled downe vengeance; Who hath beene so much humbled for these sinnes as he ought? Perhaps our selves are not personally guilty of them: but are they not our sinnes so farre as we are not abased for them and oppose them, and represse them as we should in our places and standings, whether we be Ministers or Magistrates? Thus farre wee are guilty all, therefore the Prophet might well say, *We all are as an uncleane thing*, &c.

2. By Simpathie.

Then againe, there is a great Simpathy in the hearts of good men; they are full of pitty and compassion, and therefore they joyne themselves with others, partly knowing that they are guilty in some degree with others; and partly because they are members of the same body politike and ecclesiasticall, they live in the same Church and common-wealth, therefore all joyne their confession together, *wee all are as an uncleane thing*, &c.

Vse.

To labour every one to bee humbled.

Let us make this use of it, every one of us to be humbled; doe not every one of us bring sticks to the common fire? Do we not adde something to the common judgement? If there be

be two malefactors that have committed a treſpaſſe, one of them is taken, and uſed in his kinde, he is executed, will it not greeve the other? he will thinke, was it not my caſe, I was a wretched ſinner as well as he. If there be divers Traitors, and the King is merciſull to one, and the other hee executes, will it not grieve him that is ſpared, if hee have any bowells or good nature? (beſides goodneſſe in other kindes) will hee not thinke, it was my owne caſe, there was no difference betweene me and them, only the mercy of the King? So the beſt of us may thinke, have I not a corrupt nature, and for the ſinnes of the times, am not I ſoyled with them? others have beene ſtricken, might not the ſame arrow have ſtricken mee? certainely this conſideration that we bring ſomthing to the publique ſinnes, it will make us humbled for the publique, as the Church here confeſſeth, *We are all as an uncleane thing*, &c.

To come to the particulars of the Confeſſion.

We are all as an uncleane thing.

Heere is a confeſſion of their perſons, their perſons were tainted; we are all a tainted ſeed and generation in nature, what the wickedeſt is wholy, the beſt are in part; therefore it is no error that wee ſhould ſay ſo and ſo of our ſelves in our confeſſions, as Saint *Paul* ſaith of him-

We are all tainted by nature.

himselfe, *I am sold under sinne*, Rom. 7. one would wonder that he should confesse so. Alas blessed man, he felt that in part, that others in the state of nature are wholy: so we are all filthy, the best (as farre as they are not renewed) are as other men are.

Vncleane.

Sin & leprosie.

It is a comparison taken from the Leprosie, or some other contagious disease: those that were tainted of them were separated from the Congregation seven daies, or some set time. So it is with sin, especially the sins of this people, they had sinned grievously, and were severed from their land, not seven daies, but seventy yeares, the leprosie and filthinesse of their sins and lives was such.

Indeed sinne, especially the sinne of nature, it is a leprosie, contagious, pestilentiall, and as a leprosie it spreads over all the parts and powers of body and soule. Take a man that is not changed, he hath a leprous eye, full of adulterie, hee hath a leprous uncircumcised eare, aske him how he judgeth of discourses, and Sermons, hee relisheth nothing but that which is frothy, and vaine; plaine substantiall solid discourses either in hearing, or reading, will not downe with him, hee hath a leprous judgement, his eyes, and eares. and tongue are defiled, and corrupt, he is vile, and abhominable in his speeches, he is uncircumcised in all,

all are uncleane, all his powers are defiled by nature.

All the waſhings in the Law did ſignifie this, the corruption and defilement of our natures, which needs another waſhing which they tipified, a waſhing by the blood and Spirit of Chriſt. *Chriſt came by water and blood*, both in Juſtification and Sanctification. *There is a Fountaine opened for Iudah and Ieruſalem to waſh in.* All thoſe waſhings ſhewed a defilement ſpirituall, that needed a ſpirituall waſhing. This ſinne is a leprous contagious ſinne, therefore by nature we may all crie as the Leper, *uncleane, uncleane*, the beſt of us may take up that complaint as farre as we are not renewed. A leprous man defiled the things that he touched; ſo it is with ſinne, till it be forgiven, we defile every thing. A proud man eſpecially when he is ſet out in his bravery, he thinkes himſelfe a jolly man, a brave creature; alas he is a filthy creature, not onely in himſelfe, but in every thing he puts his hand unto; he taints, and defiles every thing, even civill actions, hee ſinnes in eating and drinking: not that they in the ſubſtance of them are ſinnes, but he ſtaines every thing; for he forgets God in them, he forgets himſelfe exceedingly, and he returnes not thankes to God: ſo in morall civill actions, much more in religious, he defiles himſelfe in every thing, he is defiled to all things, and all things are defiled to him, this is our ſtate by nature, *We are all as an uncleane thing.*

Waſhings in the Law what they ſignified

Sin like a leproſie defiles all.

This

Vse. *To labour to be cleansed by the blood of Christ.*

This should enforce a necessity of cleansing our selves in the blood of Christ, that is, in the death of Christ who hath satisfied the justice of God. Our natures are so foule in regard of the guilt, and staine, that the blood of God-man that is, the satisfactory death of God-man was necessary to breed reconciliation and attonement betweene God and us. Heb. 9 14. *And the blood of Christ which by the eternall Spirit offered himselfe, must purge our consciences, &c.* our consciences will not otherwise be pacified and cleansed in regard of guilt, but will clamour and crie still; much lesse will God be appeased, neither God nor conscience will be pacified, but by the blood of him who by the eternall Spirit offered up himselfe, and then it will in regard of the guilt and staine, then God and conscience will both be appeased. Therefore in *Zach.* 13. *There is a Fountaine opened for Iuda and Ierusalem to wash in.* And *The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sinne.* Blood is of a defiling nature; but the blood of Christ cleanseth, because it is a satisfactory blood, he died, and was a sacrifice as a publique person for us all.

By the Spirit of Christ.

Then againe, considering that we are all defiled, besides this cleansing from the guilt of sinne, let us get our natures cleansed by the Spirit of Christ more and more, wee are all defiled.

Vse 2. *Take heed of society with sinners.*

And take heed of those that are defiled, take heede of sinners; who would willingly lie with a leprous person? yet notwithstanding for matter

ter of marriage, and intimate ſociety, there is a little conſcience made, men converſe with leprous company, they joyne in the moſt intimate ſociety with thoſe that are leprous in their judgements. The life of nature we know, and are carefull to avoid what may impaire it: but it is a ſigne we have not the life of grace begun in us, becauſe we doe not valew it, if we had, we would be more carefull to preſerve it, and to take heeed of contagious company. Who would goe to the Peſt-houſe, or to one that hath *Lord have mercy upon us* on the doore? none but a mad man, he might doe ſoe: and ſurely thoſe that joyne with ſwearers, and drunkards, and filthy perſons, and goe to filthy places, and houſes (as many doe, the more ſhame for them) they think they have no ſoules nor no account to make, they goe to theſe places, and infect themſelves. It is a ſigne they have no life of grace, all companies are alike to them. Is this ſtrength of grace? No, they have no life of grace, they have nothing to looſe; for if they had the life of grace they would preſerve it better.

Sinne is a filthy thing, more filthy then the leproſie, nay then the plague it ſelfe: for the plague, or leproſie, makes but the bodie loathſome; but the ſinne that we cheriſh, and are loath to heare of makes the ſoule loathſome. The one makes unfit for the company of men; but the other, ſinne, and corruption, and luſts, unfit us for the Kingdome of God, for Heaven, for

Sin worſe then the plague.

for life or death, therefore it is worse. The leprosie of the body makes a man not a whit odious to God; but the leprosie of the soule makes us hatefull to him. We may have more intimate communion with God in the plague, then out of the plague; because God supplies the want of outward comforts: but in sinne we can have no comfortable communion and society with God; therefore this plague of the soule is many waies worse then the pestilence. But we want faith, God hath not opened our eyes to see that that we shall see and know ere long, and it is happie if wee consider it in time.

In actuall sins to haue recourse to the corruption of nature.

To conclude this point, concerning the corruption of nature, take *Davids* course, *Psal.* 51. when sinnefull actions come from us, or unsavourie words, or beastly thoughts, or unchast and noysome desires that grieve the Spirit of God, let us go to the Fountaine, alas my nature is leprous, as farre as it is not purged, *I was conceived in sinne, my mother brought mee forth in iniquity*. The more we take occasion every day to see, and observe the corruption of our nature, the lesse it is; and we cannot better take occasion, then upon every actuall sinne to run to the fountaine, the filthy puddle from whence all comes, and be more humbled for that, then for particular sinnes. It is a mistake in men, they are ashamed of an action of injustice, &c, but they should goe to their nature and thinke I have a false uncleane nature, whereby I am ready to com-

commit a thouſand ſuch if God ſhould let mee alone, I have the ſpawne of all ſinne as farre as the Spirit hath not ſubdued it. It is a defect of judgement to be more humbled for particular ſinnes, nature is more tainted then any action, that ſowing, breeding ſinne (as the Apoſtle ſaith) it is worſe then the action, it breeds the reſt. So much for that, they confeſſe here, *Wee are all as an uncleane thing*, in our ſelves.

But what comes from us?

That that aggravates to the utmoſt a ſinnefull ſtate.

All our righteouſneſſe is as filthy rags.

He doth not ſay we have filthy actions, but our beſt actions are ſtained, and not one, but all. Marke how ſtrong the place is, *We all*, the people of God, he includes all, as *Daniel* ſaith, *I confeſſe my ſinnes, and the ſinnes of my people*; and there is no man in the Church but he might have this confeſſion in his mouth, *We* the people of God, and *all We*, in all our actions, *All our righteouſneſſe, &c.* ſo all the actions of all the righteous, the beſt actions of the beſt men, and all the beſt actions of the beſt men are defiled, and ſtained, it is as great an aggravation as may bee.

All the beſt actions of the beſt men defiled

Some would have it to intend the Legall righteouſneſſe, yet notwithſtanding it is true of all; and when we now humble our ſelves it is good to thinke of all; ſo we may ſay, *all our righ-*

righteousnesse, whatsoever comes from us it is stained, and defiled. As for their Legall performances there is no question of them: for alas they trusted too much to them, in *Isaiah* 1. and *Isaiah* last, they thought God was beholding to them for them, *Away with them, away with your new Moones, &c.* they were abhominable to God as *the cutting off a dogs neck*, as it is *Isaiah* the last: so all their righteousnesse, their ceremoniall performances were abhominable.

But I say we may raise it higher, it is not onely true of them, but in greater matters, in our best morrall performances, they are all as tainted rags.

Object. How can this be? It is strange it should be so, the Papists crie out here that we discourage men from good works; if all our righteousnesse be as filthy rags, why should we performe good workes?

Answ. Though our best actions be defiled, yet there is some good in them. Put case a man be sick, all the meate he eates it strengthens his sickenesse, shall he therefore not eate at all? Yes, he must eate somewhat, there is nature in him to strengthen as well as his disease. Thy best performances are stained, wilt thou doe none therefore? yes, though they be stained, yet there is some goodnesse in them; thou maist honour God, and doe good to others; besides the ill there is good; there is gold in the Ore; there is some good in every good action; nay there is so much good as that God pardons the ill, and accepts the good. So though

though our good actions be ill: yet for their kinde and matter and ſtuffe they are good, they are commanded of God: For their originall and ſpring they are wrought by the Spirit of God: for the perſon the worke-man it is one in the ſtate of grace, and for acceptance God rewards them: But it is another thing when we come before God to humble our ſelves, then we muſt ſee what ſtaines and ſinnes are in them. There is no good action ſo good, but there are wants and weakeneſſes and ſtaines and blemiſhes in it as it comes from us. The Spirit of God indeed is effectuall to ſtirre us up to good actions: but we hinder the worke of the Holy Ghoſt and doe not doe them ſo throughly as we ſhould: therefore beſides our wants and weakeneſſes, there is a tainture of them, either we have falſe aimes, they are not ſo direct, or our reſolutions are not ſo ſtrong; falſe aimes creepe in for a while, though we doe not allow them: and then there are ſome coolers of our devotion; our love is cold, our hatred of ſinne is not ſo ſtrong; our prayers are not ſo fervent, our actions are not ſo carried without interruption, but are hindred with many bie thoughts; who cannot complaine of theſe things? Who is not brought upon his knees for the weakeneſſe of his beſt actions? Nay I ſay more a Chriſtian is more humbled for the imperfections and ſtaines of his beſt actions then a civill carnall perſon is for his outward enormities: for he turnes over all his

his outward delinquences and makes the matter but a tricke of youth, when a poore Christian is abaſed for his dullneſſe and deadneſſe and coldneſſe; for falſe aimes that creepe into his actions; for interruptions in his duties, that his thoughts will not ſuffer him to ſerve God with that intention that he would, but puts him off with motions and ſuggeſtions and temptations in his beſt performances: this abaſeth him more, then outward groſſe ſinnes doth a carnall perſon. When wee deale with God, *Our righteouſneſſe it is as menſtruous cloathes.*

A double principle in a Chriſtiã

Know this for a ground, that there is a double principle in a Chriſtian in all things that he doth, there is fleſh and Spirit, and theſe two iſſue out in whatſoever comes from him. In his good words there is fleſh as well as Spirit, in his thoughts and deſires, in his prayer, his prayer it ſelfe ſtands in contraries: So every thing that comes from him it is tainted with that that is contrary, the fleſh oppoſeth and hinders the worke of the Spirit, and ſo it ſtaines our good works. Therefore contraries are true of a Chriſtian, which ſeeme ſtrange to another man. A Chriſtian at the ſame time is deformed and well-favoured, *He is blacke and comely. I am blacke but yet well-favoured*, ſaith the *Spouſe*, blacke in regard of ſinne, but well-favoured in regard of the Spirit of God and the acceptation of Chriſt. He is a Saint and a Sinner: a Sinner in reſpect that ſinne hath

Cõtraries agree in a Chriſtian

ſpread

ſpread over all parts, and a Saint in reſpect of Chriſts acceptance, *My Love and my Dove*, Chriſt makes love to his Church as if ſhe had no defilement: but he looks on her better part, he lookes on her as ſhe is in his love, and as he meanes to bring her after. But the Church looking upon her ſelfe as ſhe is in her ſelfe, ſhe is much abaſed: the ground of it is the imperfection of ſanctification in this world. The beſt of our works are *as menſtruous cloathes*, when we thinke of the corruption of the beſt things as they come from us, when we come to humble our ſelves before God, we muſt downe with proud ſtiles and Phariſaicall thoughts, although there be ſomewhat that is good: yet let us thinke of all the ill that may abaſe us.

In what caſe to ſtand upon our innocency.

There is a ſeaſon for every thing, when we are tempted to be overcome by Satan; then thinke of the good, as *Iob* when he was tempted, *I have done this and this, you cannot take away mine innocency*. In falſe temptations from the world and Satan, then ſtand upon our innocency. But when we humble our ſelves before God, *Alas I am duſt and aſhes, I abhorre my ſelfe*, as *Iob* and *Abraham* ſaid, lay all proud apprehenſions of our ſelves aſide, and all good workes, eſpecially in one kinde, in matter of juſtification, *all is dung in compariſon of Chriſt*. All muſt be ſold for the pearle, the Righteouſneſſe of Chriſt. There is no reckning muſt be had of good works by way of

merit in justification and our title to Heaven. What gives us title to Heaven and frees us from Hell? The death of Christ, the obedience and satisfaction of Christ. God by it hath redeemed us perfectly without any thing in ourselves, and accepts us to life everlasting onely by the Righteousnesse of Christ: therefore it is called Gods Righteousnesse, because it was done by Christ, it was wrought by God. Our righteousnesse is as a *menstruous cloath*, it is spotted and stained and defiled, it will not doe the deed, it will not satisfie conscience, much lesse the exact piercing judgement of God: that is the righteousnesse that must stay our soules in life and death, and we must oppose it to all temptations, as a satisfying thing that will set downe conscience to be quiet, it must be the Righteousnesse of God-Man, nothing else will doe it. *All our righteousnesse is as filthy raggs*, that is the confession of their sinfull actions.

The next thing he confesseth is senselesnesse. *There is none that calls upon thy Name; that stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee.* There be other words betweene concerning the complaint of their miserable estate, but I will handle them that concerne their sins first.

There is none that calls upon thy name.

Prayer put for the whole worship of God.

In a word, he meanes that none worshipped him: because prayer is put for the whole worship

ſhip of God, as indeed it may well be put for the whole: for it exerciſeth all the graces of the Spirit. What one grace is not ſet on worke in prayer? (it is put for all the inward worſhip of God) If it be faith, prayer is the flame of faith; when there is faith in the heart there will be prayer in the mouth. The knowledge of God, prayer is grounded upon a Promiſe; ſo it comes from that part of ſpirituall worſhip. Hope, hope makes a man pray, no man would powre out his ſupplications but to him that he hath hope in. And for Love, Gods love and mercy drawes us into his preſence, and joy and delight in the preſence of God drawes us to pray. We give God the honour of all his attributes in prayer; of his truth, of his goodneſſe, of his mercy, of his preſence every where, *&c.* So it ſets all graces on worke and gives God the honour of all, It is the worſhip of God every way, for though it be an outward verball worſhip of it ſelfe, yet it expreſſeth the worſhip of God inward: it gives God the honour of all.

Danger of neglecting prayer.

Therefore thoſe that pray not what kinde of perſons are they? Wretched perſons. The ſickneſſe is now among us: If a man ſhould aske now what Family is likelieſt to have the vengeance of God on it? though I ſpeake not to cenſure thoſe that have it, but I ſpeake in Gods ordinary courſe; ſurely thoſe that doe not exerciſe the duty of prayer. *Powre out thy wrath upon thoſe that call not upon thy name.*

Thoſe families that call not upon God humbly morning and evening, or that perſon that doth not morning and evening reverently call upon God, they are fit objects for the vengeance of God, for the plague or the like: *Powre out thy wrath upon the families and perſons that call not upon thy name,* inſinuating that the Lord will ſpare us if we doe call upon his name and humble our ſelves: If thou wilt needs powre out thy vengeance, let it be on them that have not grace humbly to call upon thy name. Let us make conſcience of this duty, except we will prove athieſts and lie open to all the vengeance of God.

There is none that ſtirreth up himſelfe to take hold of thee.

He repreſents God to us as a great perſon, that would beſtow ſome benefit, and is ready to turne away himſelfe, yet none layes hold of him or deſires him to ſtay: ſo (ſaith he) there is none that laies hold on God to keepe him that he ſhould not goe away: Therfore when he ſaith, *None calls upon thy name, or ſtirs up himſelfe to take hold of thee,* he meanes there are none that pray earneſtly. Incenſe was to be burnt, or elſe it caſt no ſweet ſmell, our prayers muſt have fire and zeale in them, our prayers muſt be cries that muſt pierce Heaven. *Out of the deepe have I cried unto thee, Lord.* Wee muſt ſtirre up our ſelves, wee muſt waken our ſelves, to waken God: indeed before

before we can waken God we must waken our selves.

There is none stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee.

Insinuating that if we would lay hold of God, he will be staied. To speake a little more particularly of this. God is so gratious that he will be staied even by prayer, the way to stay God in his judgements and to lay hold of him and to keepe him among us, it is prayer. Let us take notice now of the hand of God upon us; what is the meanes to stop his hand that he come not among us with his publick judgements? It is prayer. The way to stop God and the Angell that hath his sword now drawn over our heads, it is prayer. God so condiscends that hee will bee stopt by prayer; as we see in *Exo.*13. he saith to *Moses, let me alone, Moses* prayed and alleadged arguments to God that he should not confound his people, *Let me alone* saith he, insinuating that prayer binds Gods hands. So powerfull is prayer that it binds the Almighty, it makes the omnipotent in some sort impotent, hee cannot doe that he would, he cannot execute his wrath, prayer binds him, when a company of Christians lay hold on him by prayer, he cannot doe that he threatneth: the onely way to lay hold of God is by prayer. In *Ezek.*22. there is a complaint that *none stood in the gap*, insinuating

Prayer layes hold on God.

ting that if any had ſtood in the gap when the vengeance of God was comming abroad they might have prevented the wrath; the way to ſtand in the gap and to keep God is to pray and to pray hearrily.

Now that God may be held by our prayers, they muſt be ſtrong prayers, every prayer will not hold God, they muſt be ſtrong prayers that muſt bind ſuch a *Sampſon* that hath his ſtrength: therefore there muſt be a ſtirring up of our ſelves; he ſaith here, *There is none that ſtirreth up himſelfe to take hold of thee.* So it is the duty of Chriſtians to ſtirre up themſelves in theſe times.

Queſt. How ſhall we ſtirre up our ſelves?

Anſw. *We muſt ſtir up our ſelves to lay hold of God.*

1. *By conſidering our danger.*

Firſt, by conſidering the danger we are in: danger felt or feared, it will make a man lay hold. When a child feeles the ſmart of the rod, he layes hold upon his father or his mothers hand, ſtrike no more, when the children of God feele the ſmart of his judgements then they cry, O no more. The cry of the child prevailes with the mother, though it cannot ſpeak oft-times: So when in the ſence of ſin and miſery we cry to God, we move his bowels with crying. There is no queſtion but the ſerious apprehenſion of danger felt, doth awaken the ſoule and ſtirre it up. It is ſo alſo in danger feared, a danger feared with beliefe will worke as if it were preſent: for a man that hath a ſpirit of faith to ſee that unleſſe God be appeaſed with good courſes, he will puniſh as ſurely as if

if the judgement were upon him. Faith makes things preſent, both good and ill, and it makes a man ſenſible of things that are not yet upon him. This is the difference betweene a Chriſtian and another man, another man *puts the evill day farre off from him:* but a beleeving Chriſtian by a ſpirit of faith ſees God (except he be turned away by hearty and humble repentance) ready to ceaze upon him, and ſo he walks humbly in all his courſes. So that danger felt or feared by a ſpirit of faith awakens and ſtirrs up the ſoule to lay hold on God.

Therefore in ſpirituall dangers we ſhould eſpecially waken our ſoules to ſee in what need we ſtand of Chriſt, and the pardoning mercy of God in Chriſt, that we may waken him, and give him no reſt till we find peace in our conſciences.

2. *Meditation of the excellency & neceſſity of that we beg.*

Then againe, that that we may ſtirre up our ſelves withall is the meditation of the neceſſity and excellency of grace, and of the good things we beg: the ſerious conſideration of that will make us ſtirre up our ſelves to lay hold on God and give him no reſt till we have it. When a man thinkes the *loving kindneſſe of God is better then life*, and if I have not that, my life is nothing to me. It is not onely better then corne and wine and oyle, but then life it ſelfe. Pardon of ſinne, and a heart to doe good is better then life it ſelfe, then any thing in the world. If one ſhould offer ſuch a man this, a heart patiently

ently to beare ill, and large to doe good, and ſtrength againſt temptations; he would rather have this gratious diſpoſition then any thing in the world, he had rather have the pardon of ſinne with the ſenſe of Gods favour then any thing in the world. This will ſtirre up a man, as we ſee in *David*, *Pſal.*51. *Mercy, mercy*, it binds God, and laies hold on him, together with pardoning mercy to have a heart enlarged with ſpirituall joy. There is nothing ſpirituall, but it is ſo excellent, that if we had the eyes of our ſpirits awakened to ſee them, wee would bind God, and lay hold of him, he ſhould not goe further till he had ſhined on us.

3. *Importunity with God.*

Therefore let us offer violence to God this way, never give him reſt till we obtaine. You ſee when the two Diſciples were going to *Emmaus*, Chriſt made as though hee would have gone further, but they compelled him. Now there is a ſemblance as if God threatned war, and would take away the Goſpell, there are dangers toward. When God makes ſuch a ſemblance, let us lay hold on him, let him goe no further. Lord, night approacheth, and affliction approacheth, Lord ſtay thou ſhalt goe no further, let us ſtop God with importunity. The conſideration of danger, and the neceſſity and excellency of the things we beg will make us lay hold on God.

Outward ſervice alone not accepted.

There is an hypocriſie among men, among a company of Formaliſts, that are the bane of the times, that God will ſpue out, they are as ill

ill as prophane perſons in his noſtrils: they thinke that all devotion is in proſtrating themſelves (which is good, and more then prophane men will doe) and yeeld a dead ſacrifice to God, they will come, and heare, and yeeld the outward act, in outward humiliation. Is this to rouze thy ſelfe? outward things are never currant but when they expreſſe outwardly the inward truth; therefore take another courſe man, God cares not for the dead empty carkaſſe thou bringeſt him; worke upon thine owne heart by meditation of the danger thou art in, and of the excellency of the things thou art to beg, and meditate of the Majeſtie of God whom thou appeareſt before, of his goodneſſe and truth, *&c* affect thy heart deepely with theſe apprehenſions, let theſe ſerious thoughts draw outward expreſſions of humiliation; and then it is excellent, when the outward expreſſion followes the inward impreſſion, when there is ſomewhat inward that ſhewes it ſelfe outward, when we ſtirre up our ſelves, and not to thinke that all devotion conſiſts in a comely outward carriage (which is commendable of it ſelfe,) but becauſe men uſually reſt in it, it is prejudiciall to their ſoules good. Wee muſt offer a reaſonable ſacrifice to God, wee muſt love him in our hearts, wee muſt worke upon our hearts, and carrie our ſelves ſo in our inward man, as that we may ſtirre up our whole man, and awaken our ſoules, *Praiſe the Lord O my ſoule, and all that is within mee praiſe his holy name,*

name, we ſhould ſtirre up our ſelves by ſpeaking to our owne ſoules, that we may waken and take hold of God.

4. *To looke for an anſwer of our prayers.*

This againe will helpe it, a man ſhould never come to pray, but he ſhould have an anſwer before he hath done, either at that time or another; never give over till thou haſt an anſwer, this will make us ſtirre up our ſelves indeed. How doe you know a prayer from a formall lip-labour? A man that prayes conſcionably markes what he doth, and expects a returne, as a man that ſoweth his ſeed. He that doth a thing with hope of iſſue will doe it throughly, therefore never pray to performe an emptie dutie to God; but marke what you pray for, if it be forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, or for grace, or protection, *&c.* and doe it with that earneſtneſſe that you may hope for an iſſue anſwerable, and this going about it will make us doe it to purpoſe; doe we thinke to ſerve God with the deed done? God hath appointed prayer for our good, and to convey bleſſings to us: Let us pray ſo as wee may expect a bleſſing by it. Now that prayer that expects a bleſſing to bee conveied, it will be a prayer to purpoſe, it will make a man ſtirre up himſelfe.

There is none that ſtirreth up himſelfe to take hold of thee.

The complaint applied to the preſent times.

The complaint of this holy man of God may be taken up at this time of many of us now; how

how few are thoſe that rouze and ſtirre up themſelves, but put off God with an empty complement? Nay, in theſe times of danger, have ye not a company of idle perſons that will not vouchſafe to heare the Word, nor to come and humble themſelves; but walke and talke offenſively, as if they would dare God, or if they come here, they come not with a reſolution to heare the iſſue of their prayers, to rouze up themſelves to lay hold on God. Becauſe, as there is a great deale of Atheiſme in regard of God, ſo there is much dead fleſh in regard of men. Who is ſo pitifull of our brethren round about as he ought? We had need to ſtirre up ourſelves, the danger is preſent, we are beſet round about, yet who is ſtirred up to earneſt prayer? we want bowells of compaſſion. Thoſe that have hearts compaſſionate, it is a ſigne that God intends good to them; but of the moſt we may take up this complaint, we are dead-hearted in regard of our ſinnes againſt God, and in regard of the contagion among us. A man may ſee it by mens diſcourſes, there is inquirie how the ſickneſſe ſpreads, how many dies? but men doe not labour with God to make their accounts even with him; nor we are not compaſſionate to men, for that would bee a meanes to ſtirre and to rouze us up to lay hold of God, to ſtay his hand out of love, and pitie, and compaſſion to our brethren which are our fleſh, though it ſhould never ſeize on us: I ſay I feare this complaint is too juſtly on many of us. I beſeech

beſeech you let us labour to amend it as wee tender our owne ſalvation (perhaps that wee doe not regard ſo much, we ſhall ere long, but then) as wee tender the health of our bodies which wee preferre before our ſoules, let us humble our ſelves more then ordinarie now.

Extraordinarie humiliation required ſometimes.

Some divells are not driven out but by prayer and faſting; ſo ſome judgements they will not away without prayer and faſting, not onely publique but private faſting and prayer. Sometimes there muſt be more then ordinary humiliation for ſome ſinnes; for ſome kinde of temptations there muſt be prayer and faſting; for ſome maladies prayer and faſting, and more then ordinary ſtirring and rouzing up of our ſelves to lay hold upon God. God will not be held with ordinary humiliation, that will not doe it: but there muſt be a reſolution againſt, and a hatred of all ſinne, and to pleaſe God in all things. We muſt doe it with extraordinary humiliation now, becauſe the judgement is extraordinary. There is ordinary humiliation, and extraordinary; as there are ordinary feaſts, and extraordinary, ſo there is ordinary humiliation for daily treſpaſſes; but in extraordinary judgements extraordinary faſting and humiliation. As there is ordinary waſhing daily, but there is waſhing and ſcouring at good times; God calls for extraordinary humiliation now, not onely prayers, but ſtirring and rouzing up of our ſelves. We ſhould apprehend the danger

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as ſeizing on our ſelves; this night it may ſeize upon us for ought we know: It ſhould affect us, and make us ſtirre up our ſelves. This is the way to hold God by prayer; and if we hold him, he will hold the deſtroying Angell, he hath all creatures at his command. Thus you ſee how we ſhould confeſſe the ſins of our perſons, the ſins of our good actions, our want of calling upon God. *There is none that calls upon thy Name, that ſtirres up himſelfe to take hold of thee.* Thus farre proceed the branches of their ſinfull diſpoſition in thoſe times.

Now he complaines likewiſe of the judgements of God.

Wee all fade as a leafe, Our iniquities as the winde have taken us away, Thou haſt hid thy face, And we are conſumed becauſe of our iniquities.

The complaint hath theſe foure branches, a little of each.

We all fade as a leafe.

Men fading as leaves.

Wicked men are as leaves, and worſe, they are as chaffe. Godly men, becauſe they have a conſiſtence, and are rooted in Chriſt, and ſet in a good ſoile, they are *trees of righteouſneſſe.* But godly men in the ſtate of their nature, and in regard of this life they are as leaves: wicked men are as leaves every

every way, and as *chaffe which the winde bloweth away*, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

We all fade as a leafe.

1. *For performances.*

He meanes, firſt, in regard of ceremoniall performances that were without vigour and ſpirit of true devotion. There was no ſpirit in their Legall performances, they were dead emptie things; therefore when judgement came, they were as leaves. So an idle careleſſe hearer when judgement comes all is as leaves; when conſcience nips him (as his atheiſticall heart will doe ere long) then he is as a leafe, all fades away. The Jewes when they were in trouble, all their Legall performances faded, they were all as a leafe. So is it true in regard of mortality, the vanity of health, and ſtrength, wee all as a leafe fade away when Gods judgements come to nip us. Men are as leaves, as the leaves now in autumne fall, and there is a new generation in the ſpring; and then they fall away, and a new generation comes againe; ſo it is with men, ſome are blowne off, and ſome come on againe. *Wee all fade as a leafe*, not to be large in the point. At this time we are all as leaves, in this Citie now there is a kinde of wind that nips a world of men, many hundreds in the head. It is an autumne winde that nips the leaves, our autumne winde with us is before the time; a kinde of autumne winde in the ſpring, in ſummer, that

2. *Mortality.*

that nips the leaves and takes away the vigour of health.

And so (as I said) for all idle performances, that have not a foundation in substantiall piety; they are all as leaves, when trouble of conscience comes, they are as *Adams* figleaves; when God comes to search, and examine, they all fall off, both in respect of our performances, and in respect of our lives, wee are all as leaves when God comes in judgement, this is one part of the complaint. *We are all as leaves*, the like we have of *Moses* the man of God, *Psal.* 90. when God blowes upon us with the winde of his displeasure we fall off as leaves.

Then another expression is,

Our iniquities as the winde have taken us away.

Men out of Christ blowne away as with a winde.

As chaffe, or things that have no solidity in them are blowne away with a puffe of winde: so it is with a man, if he be not a Christian set into, and gathered unto Christ. By the fall we all fell from God, and were scattered from him; sinne blew the Angels out of Heaven, it blew *Adam* out of Paradice, and now Christ the second *Adam* gathers us to him againe by his Word and Spirit, and so we have a solid and eternall being in him. But out of Christ our iniquities as a winde, and Gods judgements blow us all away first or last. Wicked men settle on their dregs a great while; but when Gods judgement comes, it blowes them in this world

world to this part, and that part oft-times when it pleaseth him to exercise his outward judgements, but if he doe not blow them away here, he will give them a blast that shall send them to hell their center. Out of Christ there is no solidity, no consistence or being for any man: therefore when Gods judgement comes it blowes them away in this world, and at the houre of death sends them to hell, this is the state of all. *Our iniquities like the winde take us away:* he meanes here, they were blowne out of *Iury* to *Babylon.* It was a strong blast that blew them out of their owne Country.

May not we say, *Our iniquities have blowne us away?* What hath blowne us from our callings and imployments? Is it not the Pestilence? and what brings that? Is it not our iniquities? So that wee may all complaine of this, *Our iniquities have blowne us away.*

A child of God lookes to his sins in all judgemēts

We see here, he layes the blame upon their iniquities; did not the *Babylonians* carry them away? Alas they were but Gods instruments, God was displeased by their sinnes, his wrath blew them away. So you may see here the child of God in all judgements lookes to his sinnes, he justifies God, he murmurs not and saies this and that, no, but it was my sinnes, *We have sinned against the Lord,* Micah 7. *I will beare the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him,* and *Lament.* 3. *Man suffers for his sinnes,* and every one of us may say, *it*

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is our iniquities have taken us away. A gratious heart justifies God and condemns it selfe. The children of God may complaine sometimes of Gods hand, but they will never censure Gods hand: they justifie God alway, though they may complaine of the bitternesse of his hand. Here they complaine of the bitternesse of the judgement, they were blowne into another country, into cap ivity, they doe not complaine of God. God will have us complaine, but as he will have us complaine; so we must justifie him and condemne our selves, just are thy judgements.

An Hypocrite thinkes God is beholding to him for his outward performances, and when judgements befall him, he frets and censures God: either he thinks there is no God, or he frets and fumes against God, he is discontented: but a Christian justifies God and condemns himselfe. *Our iniquities have blowne us away, our sinnes keepe good things from us.*

Vse.
To lay the blame upon our sins.

Therefore let us now lay the blame where it is, search out our sinnes personall and particular, and complaine of them, they have a hand in this plague. God is no tyrant, he delights not to confound his creatures, but sinne makes him out of love with his creatures, the workemanship of his owne hands, it is our sins. Therefore let us lament the sinnes of the times: so farre we may without Hypocrisie and ought to take to heart and mourne for the sinnes of the times that we heare by others and see our

ſelves, and mourne for our owne hearts that we cannot mourne, *we muſt mourne for the ſinnes of the times*, as *Daniel* and *Nehemiah*, and all the bleſſed men of God have done. It is not the plague that hurts us, that is but Gods meſſenger; ſinne doth us more harme then all the Divels in Hell and all the plagues in the world; it is not outward evils we need to feare, let us feare ſinne and lay hold on God, he is the Lord of Hoaſts, he hath all the creatures at his command: let us get ſin away that doth us all the miſchiefe, it is that that makes bate betweene God and us, and then God makes a controverſie betweene us and the creatures: it is our ſins.

Ground of humiliation for ſin

And that is the reaſon of the neceſſity of humiliation for our ſinnes, becauſe ſinne breeds a ſeperation betweene God and us, and betweene the creatures and us. When God is offended, the creatures are infected: let us ſee our ſinnes, by them we infect the ayre, by our vaine ſpeeches and oathes and our filthineſſe. Our ſins infect the ayre, and that breeds infection in our bodies. Our ſinnes cry, they have a voice to cry to God, if our prayers doe not out-cry them. Therefore let us cry to God to heare the cry of our prayers and not of our ſinnes. How many voices have crying ſinnes! There is the voice of the people oppreſſed, the voice of filthineſſe, *&c.* ſinnes clamour in Gods eares, they clamour for wages due, *and the wages of ſinne is death*, ſinne cryes though it ſay nothing

nothing in words, it cries in Gods eares and it will not reſt till he hath powred out his vengeance. The filthineſſe and oathes and athieſme and profaneneſſe, the ſuffering of the diſhonour of his name: theſe ſinnes of the times are thoſe that pull miſeries upon us, *Our iniquities have taken us away as the wind.* So much for that.

For thou haſt hid thy face from us, and we are conſumed becauſe of our iniquities.

Sinne makes God hide his face from us, and then *we are conſumed, becauſe of our iniquities. We melt away in the hand of our iniquities,* as the word is. Indeed ſinne is a cruell tyrant, when God leaves us in the hand of our ſinnes, hee leaves us in a cruell hand. Chriſt came to redeeme us from our ſinnes, our ſins are they that torment us, it is very ſignificant in the Originall. *We are melted,* we melt away as wax before the fire, as ſnow before the Sunne, *becauſe of our iniquities,* when God gives up men to bee handled as their owne ſinnes will handle them. Nations melt before the hands of ſinne, and Kings and Kingdomes and all. Let God give up men to delight in ſinne, Kingdomes, or perſons, they melt and molder away in the hand of their ſins.

Nations and kingdomes melt before ſin.

But to ſpeake a little more of the next words.

Thou haſt hid thy face from us.

That is, thou haſt hid thy comfort from us.

Gods face what

God hath a double face, a face that ſhines on our ſoules in peace and joy and comfort, when he ſaith to the ſoule, *I am thy Salvation*: And his face that ſhines on the outward eſtate, that keepes miſery and ſickneſſe and danger from us, and beſtowes good things on us. And God takes away his face from us in regard of the inward man, when he gives us no peace: but leaves us to ſpirituall deſertion. In regard of the outward man, God hides his face, when he gives us up to Peſtilence and warre and ſickneſſe and miſeries in this life, when he gives us up to outward deſertion.

Sometimes God ſhines on wicked men in outward things, but he hides his face for peace of conſcience: and ſometimes Gods children have his face ſhining on their conſcience, but he hides his face in reſpect of outward things, ſometimes he ſhines in neither of both: as at this time he neither ſhined on theſe bleſſed men in outward favours, for they were in captivity, nor in the ſence of his love and favour, for they were in deſolation, and ecclipſed every way.

The face of God, it is as the Sunne to the creatures: when the Sunne hides his face, what is there but darkeneſſe and night? What makes the night, but the abſence of the Sun? What makes Winter, but the abſence of the Sunne? when he growes low and cannot heate the earth: So what makes winter in the ſoule, deadneſſe and darkeneſſe and dull-

neſſe

neſſe in Gods ſervice? The abſence of the face of God, God ſhines not on the ſoule. What makes night in the ſoule, when the ſoule is benighted with ignorance that it cannot ſee it ſelfe nor ſee the judgements of God? God ſhines not, *the Sunn of righteouſneſſe ſhines not* on that ſoule.

God is the Sunne of the creature, he gives life to the creature, what will become of the creature when God neither ſhines outwardly nor inwardly on it? As at the day of judgement, he ſhall take away outward comforts, there ſhall be no outward ſhining, and all inward comforts, they ſhall have no hope, hee ſhall altogether hide his face: when God the Fountaine of all good ſhall hide his face altogether from the creature, that is Hell: The place where God ſhines not outwardly with comforts nor inwardly, nor there ſhall be no hope of neither, but a place of horrour and deſpaire, that is hell, as the hell of this life is when God ſhines not on our ſoules.

The conflict of faith when God hides his face.

Now theſe holy men they complaine, yet they pray, *Thou haſt hid thy face.* Heere is the conflict of Faith that ſees God hide his face and yet will follow God; it ſees God ready to turne away himſelfe, and yet it will lay hold of him, and have a glaunce of him, it will wraſtle with him and not let him goe without a bleſſing. So there be degrees of Gods hiding of his face: though God ſeeme to hide his face and to with-draw outward comforts and per-

haps in some to with-draw his favour from their hearts inwardly: What shall they doe, droupe? No, wrastle with God as *Iacob*: see through the cloud that is betweene God and thy soule; breake thorow by faith, and with *Iob* say, *Though he kill me yet will I trust in him.* Let us stirre up our selves to lay hold on God when he seemes to turne away his face: and imitate good *Iacob*, never give over seeking the face of God.

We must seeke Gods face.

How shall we seeke the face of God?

1. *By Prayer.*

By prayer, for that brings us to the face of God though he seeme to hide his face, as *Ieremy* complaines, *Ieremy* 14. *Why art thou as a stranger?* and yet hee prayes: seeke him by prayer.

2. *In his ordinances*

Seeke him in his Ordinances; heare the Word of God, *thy face Lord will I seeke.* God invites you to seeke his face now by fasting and humiliation, seeke his face in this ordinance: here is the blessed Trinity, *Father, Sonne and Holy Ghost.* Though outwardly God hide his face in some regards; yet when he offers outward liberties, refuse them not: hee offers his face to us now in Christ, seeke by prayer and other meanes holy communion with him still; and never leave seeking till you have got a glance of him: and stir up your selves to lay hold on him, that he would shew his loving countenance upon you.

Those that turne their backs on Gods ordinances and in rebellion to his commandements

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live in sinnes against conscience, can they wonder that he hides his face from them, when they turne their backs on him? Rebellious persons that will not yeeld meekely to Gods Ordinances and submit to his Commandements, doe they wonder that God takes good things from them? When we sinne wee turne our backes upon God and our face to the Divell and the world and pleasures: when men turne their faces to sinne, to pleasures and vanity, and their backs on God, doe they wonder that he suffers them to melt and pine away? Let us doe as the Flowers do, the Marigold, &c. they turne themselves to the Sunne: let our soules doe so, let us turne our selves to God in meditation and prayers, striving and wrastling with him, look to him, eye him in his Ordinances & promises, and have communion with him all the waies wee can. Let our soules open and shut with him, when he hides his face let us droupe, as the Flowers doe till the Sunne come againe. When the waters fall the Flowers droope and hold downe their heads, when the Sunne riseth the next morning up they goe againe, as if there had beene never a shower: So when wee have not daily comfort of Spirit in peace of conscience, let us never rest seeking Gods face in his Ordinances and by Prayer, and that will cheare a drooping soule, as the Sunne beames doe the flagging flowers. Then you may know that Gods face shines upon you in some measure when he gives you meanes and gives you hearts

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to use those meanes and comfort in your consciences, that whether you live or die you are Gods: this is a beame of that Sunne-shine on the soule, when God vouchsafes joy and comfort. A little of this will banish all feares: if you have one glimpse of his countenance, you shall not need to feare the plague, or warre, or death, if he shine on you, one glance will take away all feare. *Paul* when he was in the stocks, one beame of Gods countenance made him sing at midnight; *Let thy countenance shine on us and we shall be safe*, let what will become of us outwardly. If God shine not on us for outward favours, if he shine on our soules and release them from feares and guilt, and speake peace to them, and say unto them, *he is their salvation* (and as he saith in the Gospell, *thy sinnes are forgiven thee*) all will be well whatsoever become of us. *Let us seeke the Lord while he may be found*, hold him before hee goe, let him not depart: attend upon the meanes, never misse good meanes of seeking his face till we have got a sweet answer from Heaven that he is our God.

Now followes the supplication.

But now O Lord thou art our Father, &c.

The consideration that God is our Father should stirre us up to seek to him

Heere is a prayer which is a kinde of holding God, by the relation of a Father; this is one way of stirring up our soules, to consider the relation of a Father. It stirres up bowells, when a childe is beaten by his Father, O stay Father, spare, it works upon the bowells. There

is

is a world of Rhetorick in this one word Father, why Lord, thou art my Father, ſhall I bee deſtroyed? let us lay hold on God by this relation that he puts upon himſelfe; and he will not lay it aſide though we be unworthy to be ſonnes. He doth not ſay, thou art our Father, and we are thy ſonnes; becauſe hee thought they were unworthy, (as the Prodigall ſaith, *I am unworthy to be called thy ſonne*) but inſtead of ſaying we are thy ſonnes, he ſaith, *we are the clay, thou art the potter.* Yet he is a Father continually; and though in Chriſt you cannot call him Father, yet you may by Creation, and initiation, being brought up in the Church. Goe to him with the incouragements you have, and caſt your ſelves upon him. There is a bond for you by Creation, and there is his command, he bids you call him Father, hee is a Father by Creation; looke not upon this or that ſinne, but goe to him, and call him Father, as you may call him; ſay thou art my Father, thou haſt given mee a being in the Church, wraſtle with him as you may, though as ſound Chriſtians you cannot call him Father. Be weary of your courſes, are you willing to come under Gods hand to bee ſonnes; you are ſonnes by Creation already, offer thy ſelfe to be of his family for the time to come, and God will give a ſweet report to thy ſoule. Stand not out at the ſtaves end, *Thou art our Father*, Lord. If you have a purpoſe to live in ſinne, the Divell is your father, and not God, you are of *your*

father the Divell, but if wee bee willing to submit; wee may say, *Doubtlesse thou art our Father.*

We are the clay, thou art the potter.

Resignation of our selves in prayer requisite

Heere is a resignation of themselves to God, in this tearme, *thou art the potter, we are the clay.* Indeed we are but earthen vessells the best of us, in regard of the bodily life we have; and we are at the liberty of God to dispose of as he pleaseth. So, before he comes to put forth this prayer to God, he useth this resignation of themselves into the hand of God: we are as clay in thy hands, Lord dispose of us as thou wilt: Let us remember this when we come to pray to God, use all meanes of abasement that can be; lay aside all tearmes other then abasing tearmes, *wee are the clay*, and as *Iob* saith, *I abhorre my selfe in dust and ashes.* So the Saints have done in all times, *I am not worthy to bee called thy sonne*, and *I am lesse then the least of thy mercies.* Let us lay aside proud and lofty tearmes, and *cast downe our crownes* at the foot of Christ, as the Saints in *Revel.*4. cast downe all our excellencies, let us have no thought of outward excellencies, of beautie, or strength, or riches, or high dignity, when we come to God, wee must come with low thoughts to the high God, can the creature be too low in his presence?

To abase our selves in prayer

And then come with resignation, *wee are the clay, thou art the potter*, doe with us as thou wilt; if thou dash us in peeces as a potters vessell,

veſſell, thou maiſt doe it; that is the way to eſcape. That is well committed that is committed into Gods hand; ſome men ſhift by their wits, and will not truſt God with their health, and ſtrength, they *bee double minded*, as Saint *Iames* ſaith, they will have two ſtrings to their bow, if lawfull meanes will not ſerve, unlawfull ſhall: No, but wee *muſt commit our ſelves to God as to a faithfull Creator*, and then ſee what hee will doe; then it ſtands with his honour, *hee will looke to the lowlie, I am the clay, thou art the potter*, heere I am, doe as thou wilt, as *David* ſaith, it is a bleſſed eſtate thus to reſigne our ſelves into Gods hands. If the Divell and Reprobates could bee brought to this, they ſhould never come there where they are in terrours of conſcience. Let us labour to practiſe this dutie, Lord I commit to thy hands my body and ſoule, I caſt my ſelfe into thy boſome, doe with mee as thou wilt. Some that have ſtood out at the ſtaves end with temptations many yeares, have gotten comfort by this reſignation. *VVe are the clay, thou art the potter*, thou maiſt mold and break us as thou wilt. The way now to eſcape the plague is not altogether to uſe tricks of wit, and policie (though lawfull meanes muſt be uſed) but labour to get into Chriſt, and reſigne our ſelves into Gods hand abſolutely, and ſay thus, *VVe are the clay, &c.* Lord, thou maiſt daſh us if thou wilt, as thou doſt now many hundreds weekely, thou

maist dash us in that fashion if thou wilt: Only we may have a desire that God would make our lives and health pretious to him, that we may serve him as if we were now in Heaven, and that we may have grace to make good use of all. But if God have determined and decreed to take us away, let us resigne our selves into his hands. It is no matter though the body bee *sowne in dishonour, they shall be raised in honour, wee are the clay, he is the potter*, let him do what he will with our carkasses and bodies, so he be mercifull to our soules. These vessells of clay when they are turned to earth, they shall be renewed of better stuffe, like the glorious body of Christ; then our soules and bodies shall be glorious by him that took a peece of flesh and clay for us: O the humility of Christ! we wonder that the soule should animate a peece of clay, so excellent a thing as the soule is; much more may we wonder that the Sonne of God should take a piece of flesh and clay upon him, to take our nature of base earth, to make us eternally glorious as himselfe. Let it comfort us though God dash our clay in pieces as a Potter: yet Christ that tooke our clay to the unity of his Person, our nature being ingrafted into him, hee will make our bodies eternall and everlasting as his owne glorious body. Let us resigne our selves into Gods hands, as the Church here, *Thou art the Potter, and we are the clay*, and then wee shall never miscarry.

FINIS.

THE SPIRITVALL IUBILE.

In two Sermons.

By

The late learned and reverend Divine,

RICH. SIBBS:

Doctor in Divinitie, Mr. of *Katherine Hall* in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher at GRAYES-INNE.

JOHN 8. 36.

If the Sonne therefore shall make you free, yee shall be free indeed.

GAL: 5. 1.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free.

LONDON,
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THE SPIRITUAL JUBILEE.

In two Sermons.

BY

RICH. SIBBS:

Doctor in Divinitie, Master of Katherine Hall in Cambridge, and sometimes Preacher at GRAYS-INNE.

LONDON,

THE SPIRITVALL IVBILE.

Rom. 8. 2.

For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Iesus, hath made me free from the Law of sinne and of death.

THERE be foure things especially, that trouble the peace of a Christian (and indeed of any man) in this world.

Foure things that trouble a Christians peace.

The first, is sinne, with the guilt of it, binding them over to the wrath of God, and the expectation of miserie; a heavie bondage.

The second, is (besides the guilt of sinne) the remainders of corruption, with the conflict that accompanies them while we live in this world; and that conflict must needes be tedious.

The third, is the miſeries of this life, that accompanie alway both the guilt and remainders of ſinne in this world; we are condemned to a great deale of trouble here: and this doth much exerciſe and perplex Gods children.

And then the ſhutting up of all, death, and damnation: the thought of theſe things doth much diſquiet and diſturbe the peace of a Chriſtians ſoule.

Now in this Epiſtle we have comfort againſt all theſe: Firſt, for the guilt of ſinne, that binds us over to eternall judgement, and the wrath of God; we are freed by the obedience of Chriſt, the ſecond *Adam*: as is excellently ſhewed in the fifth Chapter.

And for the remainders of corruption, that we conflict with in this world; we are aſſiſted againſt that, by the Spirit of Chriſt: for, as by the obedience of Chriſt, we are freed from the guilt; ſo by the Spirit of Chriſt, we are helped and aſſiſted againſt the remainders of our corruptions.

For the third, the miſeries of this life; we have victorie in Chriſt; *In him we are more then conquerours*, as you have it in this Chapter: They can doo us no harme, *Nothing can ſeparate us from the love of God in Chriſt Ieſus*. We have many ſingular comforts in this Chapter againſt all the troubles that can befall us; and this is one, that triumphs over all: *All things ſhall worke for the beſt, to them that love God*. What ſhould I ſpeake of hurt, from any thing that befalls

befalls us, when all ſhall worke for the beſt, by the over-ruling of him that commands all, *Verſ.* 28?

And for death it ſelfe, *Neither life nor death ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God.* And for damnation, which accompanies death, *It is God that juſtifieth, who ſhall condemne?* There is oppoſite comforts in Gods Booke, nay, in this Epiſtle, and in this Chapter, againſt all that may any way trouble our peace. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Ieſus,* ſaith the Apoſtle; and then he goes on after, to ſhew how by the helpe of the Spirit, *all things worke for the beſt, &c.* In this very Verſe likewiſe, you have this comfort ſet downe, of our freedome by Chriſt from any thing that may hurt us. *For the Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Ieſus, hath made me free from the Law of ſinne and of death.*

The words are dependant, as we ſee in the particle, for, *For the Law of the Spirit of Life, &c.* They depend upon the firſt Verſe thus, as a reaſon why, how ever there be ſinne in Gods children, yet there is no damnation to them. *There is no condemnation to thoſe that are in Chriſt Ieſus,* he prooves it thus; Thoſe that are free from the Law of ſinne, and of death, which brings in condemnation; thoſe undoubtedly are free from damnation: but thoſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus, they are freed from the Law of ſinne, and of death; therefore there is no condemnation to ſuch. But how ſhall we know, that

Dependance of the words

that we are in Christ Jesus? Those that have the Spirit, and are led by the Spirit of Christ, they are in Christ; *The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Iesus, hath freed me from the Law of sinne, and of death.* So I say, the words are especially a reason of the former, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus:* because, by the *Spirit of Christ they are freed from the Law of sinne, and of death*; and by consequent, they are freed from damnation: for, what brings in damnation, but sinne?

In the words then, there is an opposition; there is Law against Law; *The Law of the Spirit of life, in Christ*; and, *the Law of sinne, and of death.* Now, where there are contrarie Lawes, if there be contrarie Lords (as there must be) New Lords will have new Lawes; especially, if they be Lords by conquest: they will alter the very fundamentall Lawes that were before; as you know the old Conquerours have done in this Kingdome. Here is Law against Law, and Lord against Lord; Christ against sinne, and death. Here is a Lord by conquest over all other Lords, and Lawes: therefore, here must needes be an alteration of Lawes upon it, the very fundamentall Lawes must be altered. But to come more particularly to the words;

For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Iesus, hath freed me from the Law of sinne, and of death.

The words are much vexed by Expositors.

I will rather ſpeake my owne judgement of them, and reconcile them, then daſh one mans judgement againſt another: for that tends not to edification. *The Law of the Spirit of life, &c.* The meaning of the words is plaine, if we compare it with other Scriptures.

[*The Law.*] It is nothing but a commanding power: for ſo the word written, the Law (in the Apoſtles meaning) is but a power forcing and commanding. So the *Law of the Spirit of life*, is the commanding and forcing power of the *Spirit of life in Chriſt Ieſus*: and ſo the *Law of ſinne*, it is either the tyrannicall command and forcing power of ſinne, or elſe the condemning for ſinne afterwards, as we ſhall ſee hereafter; for we ſhall unfold the words better in the particulars. *Law, what.*

Firſt then, here we have ſet downe what eſtate we are in by nature; *we are under the Law of ſinne, and of death.* *Parts of the Text.*

And then, here is our freedome and deliverance from that; *we are made free from the Law of ſinne, and of death.*

And then the Author of it, Chriſt Jeſus; *The Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Ieſus hath freed me from the Law of ſinne, and of death.*

In the words, and thoſe that goe a little before, there are theſe three maine fundamentall points of Religion:

The miſerie and bondage of man.
The deliverance of man.
And his dutie.

Here you have his *miſerie*; he is *under ſinne and death.*

Here is his *deliverance*; he is *free from this by Chriſt.*

And for his *dutie*, you have it in the laſt Verſe of the former Chapter, ſpeaking of his deliverance: *Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the bodie of this death?* then it followes; *Thankes be to God through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.* Thankfulneſſe is due, not verball thankfulneſſe onely. Indeed, the whole life of a Chriſtian, after his deliverance, is a reall thankſgiving: but that is not in my Text.

To ſpeake therefore of our eſtate by nature, and of our deliverance; our eſtate is, that we are under the Law of ſinne, and death.

we are under the Law of ſinne.

Obſerv. *Naturally we are under the Law of ſinne.*

We are under ſinne: what ſinne? We are under a three-fold ſinne.

Sinne three-fold.

1 *Adams ſinne.*

We are under the firſt ſinne of our firſt father: for as *Levi* payd Tythes in *Abraham* to *Melchiſedech*, ſo we all ſinned in the Loynes of *Adam* our firſt Parent, and the guilt of that firſt ſinne lyes upon us.

2 *Originall ſinne.*

Secondly, there is another ſinne that is derived and ſprings from that firſt ſinne; which is the deprivation of the Image of God, the pravation of our nature, we call it originall ſinne; whereby we are ſtripped of that good we had in our firſt creation, and have the contrarie

trarie image, the image of Satan ſtamped upon us: ſo we are under the firſt ſinne, the guilt of it; and we are under the ſinne of nature, which we call originall ſinne, becauſe it is derived to us even from our birth and firſt originall we had in *Adam.*

3 *Actuall ſinnes.*

And then we are under actuall ſinnes, which are ſo many bonds to tie us faſt under ſinne. We are dead by nature, but we are dead and rotten by actuall ſinnes; we ſuper-adde to the guilt of our ſinne, by our dayly converſation. We are blind by nature, but we are blinded indeed much more, by our cuſtome of life. Every ſinne doth, as it were, tie us faſter to damnation, and keepes us faſter under the bondage of ſinne. Every new ſinne takes away ſome part of the light of the underſtanding, and takes away ſome freedome of the will; it darkens the judgement more and more, and enthralls the will and affections, and bindes a man more and more to the juſt ſentence of God: That as it is, *Prov.* 5. *the ſinner is tied with the bonds of his owne ſinnes*: he is under the chaines of an habituated wicked courſe of life, as well as of the ſinne of nature, which is the ſpring of all.

Prov. 5.

Sinnes as chaines.

This is the miſerable ſtate of man, and theſe chaines of his ſinnes reſerve him to further chaines: Even as the Devill is reſerved in chaines, that is, in terrours of his conſcience, which as chaines bind him till he be in Hell, the place he is deſtinated to; ſo we being in the

the chaines, and bondage, vexed with our sinnes, we are at the same time in the chaines of terrours of conscience, the beginnings of Hell, and reserved to chaines of damnation, and death, world without end. It is another manner of matter, our estate by nature, then it is usually taken for. If men had but a little supernaturall light, to see what condition they are in, till they get out into Christ Jesus, they would not continue a minute in that cursed estate.

Iustice in God, to give up men to their sinnes.

And we have deserved to be cast into this estate, by reason that we left our subordination and dependance upon God; which being creatures, we should have had. Therefore we turning from God to the creature, God punisheth our rebellion to him, with rebellion in our selves; because we withdrew our subjection from him, that therefore there should be in us a withdrawing of the subjection of sinne, and of the whole soule to God. So this captivitie to, and giving up to sinne in us, it is penall, and sinfull; but as it comes from God, it is meerely judiciall. Therefore we have it oft in the New Testament, in *Rom.* 1. & 2 *Thess.* The *Gentiles*, because they would not entertaine the Truth that they might have had by the light of Nature, *God gave them up to their sinnes.* And then the Christians, after the Apostles times, they set slight by the good Word of God, the Gospel, *therefore God gave them up to beleeve lyes.* It was sinne in them; but as God gave them up, it was ju-

Rom. 1. 2 Thess.

stice.

ſtice. So this captivitie, and giving men up to their owne luſts, it is juſtice, as it comes from God, it is a horrible judgement; it is worſe, then to be given up to the Devill himſelfe: for by being given up to our luſts, we encreaſe our damnation. To be given up to be tormented of the Devill, it is not ſuch a miſchiefe, as this ſpirituall captivitie under ſinne: we are guiltie our ſelves, of our owne thraldome. And this will encreaſe both the ſhame, and the puniſhment: The ſhame, that a man ſhall ſay in Hell afterward; I have brought my ſelfe hither, I had meanes enow, prohibitions enow; I had ſometimes chaſtiſements of God, ſometimes motions of his Spirit, ſometimes one helpe from God, ſometimes another: yet notwithſtanding I brake through all oppoſitions that God ſet betweene me, and the execution of my luſts, and to Hell-ward I would; and hither I have brought my ſelfe. So that indeed, the greateſt part of Hell torment, the ſhame of them eſpecially it will be, that men have brought themſelves by their owne wits and carnall luſts, thither. And indeed, all the wit a carnall man hath that is not ſanctified by Gods Spirit, it is to worke himſelfe to miſerie, to be a drudge to his luſts; that ſets all the parts he hath on work, not how he may ſerve God, and be happie in another world; but how he may proule & provide for his owne carnall luſts. This is the eſtate of all men by nature, they are under ſinne, under the power of ſinne, the blind judgement leades the

The miſerie of being under ſinne.

the blind affections, and *both fall into the ditch*, into Hell.

1 *We are under Satan.*

The fearefulneſſe and odiouſneſſe of this condition, to be in priſon, and thraldome, and bondage to all kind of ſinne, naturall & actuall, it will appeare further by this; That being in ſubjection to our baſe luſts, by conſequence we are under the bondage of Satan: for, he hath power over death, by ſinne; becauſe he drawes us to ſinne, and then accuſeth us, and torments us for ſinne. By ſinne, we come to be under his bondage; ſo that we are under the fearefull captivitie of the Devil, while we are under the captivitie of ſinne: for, all the power that he hath over us, it is by ſinne; he is but Gods executioner for ſinne. Firſt, God gives him power to draw us to ſinne, to puniſh one ſinne with another, and then he ſuffers him to accuſe, and to torment us afterward. What a fearfull bondage is this, that being under ſinne, we are under Satan? We are ſervants to our enemie; as God threatned his people, that they ſhould ſerve their *enemies*: but this is a greater judgement, to be ſlaves to this enemie. This is the condition of every ſinner. To be a ſlave to a mans enemie, it is a judgement of judgements: yet notwithſtanding, this is the caſe of every man by nature, he is a ſervant to his enemie, to Satan, and his owne luſts. He is a right *Cham, a ſervant of ſervants*: for Satan uſeth him as the *Philiſtims* did *Samſon*, he puts out his eyes, he puts out his judgement, his wits, he beſots him;

him; and so he goes blind in Satans blind worke, and businesse: he is in a Maze all his life long, till at length he sinke into Hell. So this is the aggravation of a mans estate by nature, he is a slave to his enemie. You know blessed *Zacharie* saith, *Luke* 1. *That being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without feare, in righteousnesse and holinesse all the dayes of our life.* There is no wicked man, but he is acted by the Devill (oh, that we would consider of it:) we thinke we are led onely by our owne lusts and sinnes, as men; but untill a man be in Christ, *he is ruled by the command of the Prince of the Aire*, and in 2 *Tim.* 2. *he is ruled by Satan, according to his will.* Even as a Bird in a snare, it may move up and downe, but it is still in the snare, and he that hath it there, cares not, he knowes he hath it safe, and he goes about to catch other birds: So when we are in our lusts, and follow them, the Devil hath us in his snare, he is secure of us, and goes about getting more and more still; the Devill acts, and moves, and leads all carnall men.

Luke 1.

Wicked men acted by the Devill.

Ephes. 2.

2 Tim. 2.

But how chanceth it, that they doe not know and perceive it?

It is because he goeth with the streame of their owne corruptions. Indeed we must make some limitation of this. In some cases, the Devill doth not move carnall men, they are better then the Devill would have them be, for the good of the Common-wealth, and State; but yet take them as they stand in relation to Reli-

Carnall men better then the Devill would have them.

Religion, they may be devilliſh, ſecret, bitter, darke enemies to that. Though they may have ſtrong heads for the good of the State, yet it is not from any intrinſecall good in themſelves; but God uſeth them, and makes them doe that. For the Devill would have all naught; he is an enemie to the very Swine, therefore much more to the good of a State. Therefore there are many politike civill Vertues, as we ſee in *Achitophel*, and *Iudas*, which no queſtion, is more then the Devill would have; he would not have civill men ſo good, he would not have them doe that they doe for the common good oft times: yet the Devill will be ſure to be at one end of the good they doe, to taint them, that their aime ſhall not be good, it ſhall not be to the glory of God, it ſhall not be in reference to ſalvation.

And ſo as the good is temporall, they have a reward ſutable to their deſire, they care for no more: for they beleeve not Heaven, but in a generall notion; It may be there is ſuch things, it may be not: therefore the good they doe, is ſome little pettie obedience; and what doe they deſire? To be well eſteemed, and reſpected; to be venerable, and to have honourable opinions in the hearts of men, that men may ſtoupe in their conceits to them as men of reſpect. This they deſerve indeed, and this they have; God gives them that they would have. But as Chriſt tells the *Phariſes*,

rises, who did excellent good things, but it was to be *seene of men*, he tells them, *they had their reward*: they had all they looked for; for they were *Atheists*, they looked not for Heaven. So a man may say of all men that are out of the state of grace: though they doe more then the Devill would have them, and for diverse degrees of that they doe, they are not subject to the Devill; yet he taints their actions one way or other in the end, he joynes himselfe in the action first or last, he hath a hand in all their actions. So that notwithstanding there be many good things, yet this hinders not a whit, but that they may be under the power of the Devill: for it is but in reference to civill Government, and State, which is but for a time: *The fashion of this world passeth away*; here will be no Magistrates to governe, nor no people to be governed, ere long.

I speake it, because many men are readie to propound such and such, to imitate them in their courses; and to say, I will be no more religious then he: when, perhaps, all may be but formalitie, and common graces for this world. God will honour some so much, to be instruments for common good here: but what is that to eternall salvation? He may be a slave to his lusts, and an enemie to the power of grace, for all that. Therefore, unlesse we see men wrought upon thorowly, to be of the mind of Christ, to have the Spirit of Christ, to judge of things as Christ judgeth,

judgeth, to judge the ſervice of God, and doing his will, to be the beſt things, and to *goe about doing good*, and that with reference and obedience to God; all is nothing elſe: A man may be under the bondage of his corruptions, and ſo by them to Satan.

2 *To worſe things then our ſelves.*

Againe, when we are under our luſts, and ſinnes, it is about earthly things; we are in ſlaverie to that which is worſe then our ſelves. Sinne is the vileſt thing in the world, and the things whereabout ſinne is occupied, are the profits, and pleaſures, and trifles of this world, meane pettie things; it is a baſe ſlaverie, to conſider whom we ſerve.

3 *So excellent a thing as the ſoule.*

And to conſider what it is that is in bondage, the immortall ſoule of man, that had the image of God ſtamped upon it; and in the ſoule of man, the moſt excellent part, the will, that is moſt free, yet being under ſinne, it is moſt bound. Our will was given us, to cleave to God, and the beſt things; to make choiſe of the beſt things, and to cleave to them undivided in life, and death, and for ever; and ſo by cleaving to things better then our ſelves, to advance our ſelves to a higher condition. For when the ſoule of man that is under better things, that is under God, and Chriſt, and doth cleave to God, and Chriſt, in his affections, and to the things of a better life; theſe be things bettering a mans condition, even rayſing the ſoule from its owne preſent eſtate, to a glorious condition.

For

For we are as we affect, our wills and our affections doe transforme us; therefore wicked men are called the World, because they love it; and holy men are called heavenly, because they are carryed in their affections and wills, to heavenly things. Our affections and wills doe denominate us, they give us the name; nay, that is too little; they doe giveus the realitie, the state. When God so alters and changes our dispositions, that out ofa sanctified judgement, wee make a right choyse of things, and then cleave to them in our wills and affections constantly; this raiseth our nature to be higher then it selfe. *Hee that cleaveth to the Lord, is one Spirit*, as the Apostle saith. Indeed, our affections transforme us anew. As it is with the fire, it transformes cold and grosse bodies to be all fierie: so God, and heavenly things, worke upon our hearts, they transforme us to be like themselves. *Simile.*

Now for this inward soule of man, which is so excellent a thing, fitted by God to cleave to better things, for communion with himselfe, and everlasting happinesse; for this, to be a drudge to base pleasures, and profits, to the windie empty things of this world, to vaine titles, & such like empty things, and to place its happinesse in these things; it is a pittifull degeneration, that so excellent a thing as the immortall soule of man, that shall never die, should joyne with those things that shall

make him miserable; that it shall be better for a man that he had never beene, as it is said of *Iudas*; *It had beene better for that man that he had never beene borne.*

4 *The fruit of it.*

In the next place, consider that that followes this thraldome and baseneſſe to our lusts: there is a double fruite of it. The one, is

1 *Uncertaine pleasure.*

uncertaine: I meane, for our yeelding to our base affections, what get we? *The pleasures of sinne for a season*, a little pleasure, or profit, perhaps not that neither: but if we have it, it is a fading commodity, that goes away quickly; when they are gotten, what are they? vanity; they promise more before we get them, then they performe when we have them. But then, there is another wages, that God in justice hath appointed for it, that is damnation; *The wages of sinne is death:* it cries for wages. When we are under sinne we can looke for nothing but death; and therefore he joyns them together here; *the law of sin, and of death*; an expectation of eternall misery. This a man hath that is wedded to himselfe, that hath not learned the first lesson in the Gospel, to deny himselfe; he is a wretched slave to the Devill, in his best part, and power; his lusts imprison his will and affections; his wit, that should devise how hee should be happy for for eternitie, it is onely a drudge to his base lusts. There are a company of men, that are the shame, and blemish of the Gospel, that set their wits a worke onely how to devise to satisfie

satisfie their base lusts; and then the issue and conclusion of all this, is eternall misery; and in the meane time, the expectation of misery in terrours of conscience. This is the estate of every man, till he be translated by the Spirit of God to a better condition in Christ, that he spends out his time in a base and miserable thraldome, worse then the thraldome of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, or in *Babylon*.

5 *Men are insensible of their bondage.*

And it is so much the more fearefull, because men are insensible of it, like Bedlams, that make nothing of their chaines, that laugh in their chaines. A franticke man, when he is bound in chaines, he laughs; when they that are about him weepe at his misery: so you have men frolicking in sin, they will sweare at liberty, and besot themselves at liberty, and corrupt their consciences, even for base trifles: they thinke they are in no bondage, they doe all wondrous chearefully, and well; when as, indeed, the more chearefully and readily any man performes the base service of sinne, the more he is in bondage. Freedome is opposite to bondage; notwithstanding, such is the nature of sinne, that the more freely we doe it, the more we are bound; because the more freedome we have, the more we are intangled; wee runne into guilt upon guilt, till after guilt comes execution, an eternall separation from the presence of God, and an adjudging to eternall torments for ever.

Freedome in sin is a bondage.

The false judgement of the world, who are happy.

So that it is a falſe judgement that the world hath; they thinke great men happy men, why? They doe as they liſt. I, they may doe ſo, and oft times they take the liberty to doe ſo; they will be under no Lawes, they are ſo farre from obeying the Law of God, that they are loath to be hampred with the Lawes of the State, or with any Lawes, but they will be above all. A miſerable condition, why? the more will a man hath in evill, the more miſerable; for the more freely, and with leſſe oppoſition hee tangleth himſelfe, (let his place be never ſo great) the deeper he ſinks in rebellion, and the deeper hee ſinks into guilt upon guilt; which will all come to a reckoning, at the houre of death, and day of Judgement. So the men that we admire, and envie moſt (out of ſimpleneſſe, and want of judgement) they are the moſt miſerable creatures in the world; if they be out of Chriſt; and have not grace: for they have nature let looſe in them, without reſtraint, and nature being under the captivitie of ſinne, becomes *out of meaſure ſinfull*, in ſuch: The leſſe a man is curbed either from Lawes above him, or the Law within him, to check him, the more wretched man he is: for the deeper hee goes in rebellion and ſinne, the deeper his torment ſhall be afterward.

Great perſons have a great priviledge; what is that? they ſhall be greatly tormented; that is all the priviledge that I know, if they be naught.

naught. Thoſe that ſhake off all bonds, any eafthly priviledge and prerogative, is ſo farre from exempting them from miſery, that it makes them more miſerable: for unleſſe they have grace to uſe thoſe things that might be an advantage to better things, they ſinke deeper and deeper into ſinne, and ſo into terrours of conſcience, firſt or laſt; and by conſequence, to damnation: Oh, it is a fearefull condition, to be the greateſt Monarch in the world, and not to be in Chriſt, and under the Law of *the Spirit of life in Chriſt*! they are the objects of pitty above all kinde of men, to truely judicious ſoules, that know out of Gods truth, and by the light of the Spirit, what is to be judged of the ſtate of men. You ſee then what kind of miſery it is that naturall men are under, being under the Law of ſinne.

6 *The tyrannie of ſinne.*

To declare it a little further; for men will hardly thinke it is ſuch a bondage, to be under ſinne. Therefore, I beſeech you, doe but conſider how ſinne tyrannizeth, where it gets ſtrength; ſee it in ſome inſtances. The covetous worldly man that is under the Law of that luſt (he hath the law of other luſts, but that is predominant) ſee how it tyrannizeth; it takes away his reſt, the uſe of Gods bleſſings, the good things he hath given him to enjoy, it makes him in thrall to the creature. Wee ſee it in carnall pleaſure; *Amnon*, when he luſted after his ſiſter *Thamar*, it tooke away his reſt.

Covetouſneſſe.

Carnall pleaſure.

reſt. And how doth this baſe affection tyrannize in ſome men? it makes them forget their bodies ſo, that they overthrow their health, and haſten death temporall; it hurts the naturall man, it makes them forget their credit, it makes them forget their ſoules, it makes them ſtinke, by living in that carnall noyſome ſinne. The judicious Heathen were ſenſible of it, by the ſtrength of naturall judgment: yet ſinne where it is in any ſtrength uncurbed, it ſo tyrannizeth, that it makes men forget both health, and life, and credite and eſtate in this world, that they come to nothing. What ſhould I ſpeake of forgetting life eternall, and damnation? (they have no faith to beleeve that, but) ſuch is the tyrannie of ſinne, that it makes them forget things ſenſible; that by experience after, they ſee how dearely they have bought their baſe pleaſures, with the loſſe of credite, and health, and comfort; with the loſſe of the eſtate that God hath truſted them withall, in this world.

Ambition. Take a man that is under the baſe Law of ambition, a proud perſon, ſee how it tyrannizeth over him; it makes him forget blood, and kinred, all the bonds of nature, he will kill his brethren to make his way; as you know in our owne Stories, ſuch Tyrants, if there were not Stories enow in this kind, daily experience ſhewes it. Where the Law of ambition and pride raignes, it makes the heart wherein

wherein this Tyrant sets up his Throne, to forget all bonds whatsoever, of nature, and justice. You know whose speech it was; If the Law must be violated, it must be for a Kingdome: but men will doe it for farre lesse; we see what men will doe for a base place to command others in this world, (when they are conscious of their owne ill courses, and commanding corruptions) and all to give way to the base affection of ambition. A touch is enough of these things, for experience witnesseth, and goes along with me. All men that are not in Christ, they have some predominant sinne, either some base sinne, or some more refined sinne, and lust, that keepes them from Christ and salvation, and this tyrannizeth over them.

Sin takes away the sight of it selfe.

And this is the nature of this Tyrant sinne, it hath such possession of a man till he be got out of it, and be in Christ, that it takes away the sight of it selfe, it hinders the knowledge of it selfe, it puts out a mans eyes. For that whereby a man should judge of corruption, it is corrupt it selfe. *The wisedome of a man is death, it is enmitie to God.* The wit that he hath that should discerne of his base courses, it tangles him more and more to his owne lusts: so that wit, and wisedome, the highest part of the soule, it is imprisoned by base affections, and that power that should discerne corruption, it is set on worke to satisfie corruption. What is the wit of a man that is not in

Wisedome in man corrupted.

in Christ, occupied about all his life time? it is nothing but a drudge, and a slave, to devise meanes to satisfie his base lusts. Take a worldly man, hee is exceeding witty to contrive worldly plots, and businesse (though he be a dunce, and a sot, in matters that are spirituall) in his owne tract and course, hee hath a shrewd wit, why? because his lusts to the world, they whet his wit. So we see the best thing in man now, is inthralled to sinne, his very wisedome it selfe; therefore it is enmity to God.

Men not given up to all sinnes alike.

Every man hath some *Herodias*, some sinne or other that hee is in bondage to, till he be in Christ. He cannot in a like measure, be given and inthralled to all sinnes, it is unnecessary: because one sinne serveth another; many sinnes serve one great one. Corruption doth not runne in all streames in one equality: but it runnes amaine one way unchecked, and uncontrolled, and unmortified, (in all men that are not in Christ) and subdues the soule to it selfe, that it can devise, and plot for nothing, but to satisfie that base lust. This is the state of man by nature.

Object.

But some will say, it is not our state and condition; wee are baptized, and receive the Sacrament, and heare Sermons, and read good bookes, and therefore we are not under sinne.

Answer.

But saith the Apostle, *His servants ye are to whom ye obey*; you may know the state of your service,

ſervice, and ſubjection by the courſe of your life. And as Chriſt ſaith to the *Iewes, Iohn* 8. they bragged that they were free: alas, proud people, they were neither free for ſoule, nor ſtate: for they were under the *Romanes*. They thought they were free becauſe they were *Abrahams children:* were they not in captivity to the *Egyptians*, and under the *Babylonians*, and in preſent captivity under the *Romanes?* yet they forget themſelves out of pride: *If the Sonne make you free, ye are free indeed:* but becauſe they were in a ſinfull courſe, they were ſlaves of ſinne. So it is no matter what priviledges men are under, that they receive the Sacrament, and are baptized, and live in the Church, &c. *His ſervants ye are, whom yee obey.* If there be prevayling luſts that ſit up their throne, and tyrannize in our hearts, and ſet our wits on worke, to deviſe how to ſatisfie them, more then to pleaſe God; it is no matter what priviledges we have, it is no matter whoſe livery we weare, but whom we ſerve. We may weare Gods Livery, that ſhall be pulled over our heads afterwards, and we be uncaſed, that it ſhall appeare that we are the Devils ſervants under the profeſſion of Chriſt.

There is no man that is not in Chriſt, that denies his corrupt nature any thing: if revenge bid him take revenge, he will if he can; if he doe not, it is no thankes to him, but to the Lawes. If any ſinne riſe in the heart, all

the

the parts of the body, and powers of the soule, are ready weapons to this tyrant, to keepe a man in slavery. As if anger and wrath, keepe a man in bondage, you shall have it in his countenance, his hand will be ready to execute it, his feet will be ready to carry him to revenge. If it be a proud heart that a man is kept under, you shall have it in his lookes, and expressions outward. If it be the base affection of lust, you shall have adultery in the eye, an unchast and uncircumcised eare, and filthy rotten language. Men you see upon all occasions are ready to execute the commands of these tyrannicall lusts, in some kinde or other. Therefore never talke of thy freedome, when lusts are raised up within thee, either ascending from thine owne corruption, or cast in by Satan, and so joyning with thy heart, presently thy tongue will speake wickedly, and thine eyes, and lookes, and countenance, shew that there is a naughty heart within, and the whole man is ready to execute it, further then a man is curbed by Law, or respect to his reputation or the like, which is no thankes to him. Yet a man cannot act the part of a civill man so well, but the corruption of his vile heart, will betray it selfe in his lookes or language, one time or other this tyrant will breake forth. Therefore let us looke to our hearts and courses, for if we be not in Christ, we are under the *Law of sin*,

And

And of Death.

We are not onely under the law of sinne, but also of death. Now, there is a death in this world; the separation of the soule from the body; but that is not so much meant here: for when we are in Christ, we are not free from this death.

We are under the law of death.

1 *Naturall.*

But there a is worse death, which is a separation of the soule, from the favour and love of God, and from the sanctifying, and comforting Spirit of God: when the Spirit of God doth not comfort, and sanctifie the soule, it is a death. For as the soule is the life of the body; the body hath but a communicated life from the union it hath with the soule. The soule hath a life of its owne, when it is out of the body, but the body hath its life from the soule; so it is with the soule, when there is an estrangement of the soule from the Spirit of God, & Christ, sanctifying and comforting and chearing it, then there is a death of the soule: the soule can no more act any thing that is savingly, and holily good, then the body can be without the soule. And as the body without the soule, is a noysome odious carcasse, offensive in the eyes of its dearest friends: so the soule without the Spirit of Christ, quickening and seasoning it, and putting a comelinesse and beautie upon it, it is odious. All the cloathes, and flowers you

2 *Spirituall.*

3 *In this world.*

you put upon a dead body, cannot make it but a ſtinking carkaſſe: ſo all the morall vertues, and all the honours in this world put upon a man out of Chriſt, it makes him not a ſpirituall living ſoule: he is but a loathſome carrion a dead carkaſſe in the ſight of God, and of all that have the Spirit of God: for hee is under death, he is ſtarke, and ſtiffe, unable to ſtirre or moove to any duty whatſoever, he hath no ſenſe, nor motion. Though ſuch men live a common, naturall civill life, and walke up and downe, yet they are dead men to God, and to a better life. The world is full of dead men, that are dead while they are alive, as S. *Paul* ſpeakes of the *Widow that lives in pleaſures.* A fearefull eſtate, if we had Spirituall eyes to ſee it, and thinke of it.

2 *At the houre of death.*

But then after the death of the ſoule in this world, there is another degree of ſpirituall death; which is, when the ſoule leaves the body, then the ſoule dies: for then it goes to hell, it is ſevered for ever from the comfortable and gracious preſence of God, and likewiſe it wants the comforts it had in this world.

3 *At the dayo f Indgment.*

And the third degree of it is, when body and ſoule ſhall be joyned togeather; then there is an eternall ſeparation of both, from the preſence of God, and an adjudging of them to eternall torments in hell. This is the ſtate of all men that are not in Chriſt, they are dead in ſoule while they live; dead after the

ſepara-

separation of the soule and body; and after to be adjudged to eternall damnation, world without end. Life is a sweet thing, and wee know death it is terrible; when we would set out our hatefulnesse to any thing, wee use to say, *I hate it as death*: doe wee love life, and doe we hate death? we should labour then to be out of that condition, that we are all in by nature, wherein we are under sinne and death, in regard of spirituall life (I meane) for, for civill life, and government, and policy, men may have life and vigour enough, that are hypocrites: but I speake of a better life, an eternall life, that is not subject to death.

Now, marke the joyning of both these together, we are under sinne and death by nature; where a man is under sinne, he is under death: for as the Apostle saith, *Rom. 5. Sinne entred into the world, and by sinne death.* They were neither of both Gods creatures, neither sinne nor death: but sinne entred into the world by Satan, and death by sinne. *Oh, ye shall not die*, saith Satan; he was a lyar alway from the beginning: so now he saith to men, you shall not die; you may doe this, and doe well enough, but he is a lyar, and a murtherer; when he solicites to sinne, he is a murtherer. Let us take heed of solicitations to sinne, from our owne nature, or from Satan; marke how God hath linked sinne, and death, *The wages of sinne is death.* When we are tempted to sinne, we thinke, I shall have this credit, or

A man under sin is under death.

Rom. 5.

or profite, or contentment, or preferment, and advancement in the world. I, but that that you get by sinne, it is not so great as you looke for, when you have it; if you get it at all: but afterwards comes death, the beginnings of eternall death, terrours of conscience universally follow, if a man be himselfe, if he be not besotted. The more a man is a man, and enjoyes the liberty of his judgement to judge of things; the more he sees the misery that is due after sinne, with a fearefull expectation of worse things to come. Sinne, and death are an adamantine chaine, and linke that none can sever; who shall separate that which God in his Justice hath put together? If sinne goe before, death will follow; if the conception goe before, the birth will follow after: if the smoake goe before, the fire will follow. There is not a more constant order in nature, then this in Gods appointment, first sinne, and then death, and damnation after.

Sinne and death goe together.

Vse.
To see death in sinne.

Therefore when wee are tempted to sinne, let us reason with our selves, *there is death in the pot*, let us discerne death in it, it will follow. And if a man after repent of it, it will be more sharp repentance and grievous, then the sinne was pleasant; that a man shall have little joy of his sinne, if he doe repent; if he doe not repent, what a fearefull estate is a man in, after he hath sinned? Sinne, and death goe together, no humane power can sever them:

for

for take the greatest Monarch in the world, when he hath sinned, conscience is above him as great as hee is; for conscience is next under God; it awes, and terrifies him, and keepes his sleepe from him: as we see of late in our bloody neighbour Country, after that great Massacre, he could not sleepe without Musicke, and the like. All that they have and enjoy in the world, all their greatnesse, it will not satisfie and stop the mouth of conscience: but when they sinne, they feele the wrath of God arresting, and they are as it were, shut up in prison, under the terrours of an accusing conscience, till they come to eternall imprisoment, in the chaines of hell, and damnation. This is the estate of the greatest man in the world, that is not in Christ. They are not so happy as we thinke they are, they are imprisoned in their owne hearts: though they walke at never so much liberty abroad, and doe what they list: for sinne and death goes together; and before eternall death comes, the expectation, and terrours of it seize on them for the present. So that whatsoever our first birth be, though it be noble, and great, yet by it we are bond-slaves under sinne and death, unlesse our second birth, our new birth, make amends for sinne, for the baseneſſe of our first birth. This prerogative, our spirituall nobleneſſe, is such an estate wherein wee are not borne, but are borne againe to it, *to an inheritance immortall, &c.* But

by

by nature wee are all bond men, though wee be be borne never so nobly. Therefore let us never bragge of our birth, as the Jewes did, that they were the children of *Abraham*. No, saith Christ, you are of your father the Devill. Let none stand upon the Gentrie, and Nobility of their birth, unlesse they be taken out of the condition they are in by nature, to be in a better condition in Christ: for we see all men naturally, are under the law of sinne and death.

These things are slighted, because *wee enjoy the pleasures of sinne for a season*; men thinke to be inthralled to sinne, it is pleasant thraldome, they are golden fetters: for I shall have the pleasures of sin all my life time, &c. and for death, I will set a Romane spirit against death. Saith a Romane, what, is it such a matter to die? It is nothing to die; they set a good face on the matter. And this is the conceite of many men, till they come to it: but alas, to be inthralled to death, it is another matter, for behind death, there is a gulphe. A man may breake the hedge well enough with a strong resolution to die; it is nothing to die, if there were an end. But there is a gulphe, there is damnation, and destruction behind, there is eternall torment behind, to be adjudged from the presence of God for ever, to be separated from all good, and all comfort, and to have societie with the Devill and his Angels in hell, and that for ever,

Eternitie of misery should deterre from sinne.

ever, and for ever. Thou maist perhaps make slight of the service of sinne, because thou hast the present baits to delight thee; but thou shouldst regard death. Thou maist neglect death; but then regard eternall death. This word *Eternall*, it is a heavy word; *Eternall* separation from all good, and eternall communion with the Devill, and his Angels, and for the wrath of God to seize on thy soule eternally, world without end, me thinkes men should not set light by that. Therefore considering that this is our estate by nature, we are all slaves to sinne, and death, let us labour to get out of this cursed estate by all meanes, which is by

The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Iesus.

Now, I come to speake of our freedome, *The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Iesus, hath freed me from the Law of sinne and death.* This is good news indeed, to heare of freedome: good newes to the *Israelites* to heare of freedome out of *Egypt*, and for the Jewes to heare of *Cyrus* Proclamation for their freedome out of *Babylon*. Freedome out of bondage is a sweet message. Here we have such a message, of spirituall freedome, from other manner of enemies, then those were. The yeare of Jubile, it was a comfortable yeare to servants that were kept in, and were much vexed with their bondage: when the yeare of Jubile came, they were all freed; therefore there was

Freedome acceptable.

great expectation of the yeare of Jubile. Here we have a ſpirituall Jubile, a manumiſſion and freedome, from the bondage we are in by nature. *The Spirit of life in Chriſt, makes us free from the Law of ſinne, and death.* There is life in Chriſt, oppoſite to death in us: there is a Spirit of life in Chriſt, and a Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt, oppoſite to the law of ſinne, and of death in us. So that this is our happineſſe, while we live here (oh it is the bleſſednesſe of men to make uſe of it while they have time, and ſpace and grace to repent, and to cleave to Chriſt) that whatſoever ill we are under by nature, we may have full ſupply in Chriſt; for all the breaches that came by the firſt *Adam*; There came the wrath of God, the corruption of our nature, terrours of conſcience, death and damnation, all theſe followed the ſinne, and breach of the firſt *Adam*; all theſe are made up in the ſecond. He hath freed us from all the ill wee received from the firſt *Adam*, and that we have added our ſelves: for we make our ſelves worſe then we come from *Adam*, by our voluntary and daily tranſgreſſions: but wee are freed from all by the *Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Ieſus.*

We are freed from all ill by Chriſt.

How comes this freedome?

1 *By ſatisfaction.*

There can no freedome be without ſatisfaction to divine Juſtice. For why are we under ſinne? God gives us up to ſinne, why are we under

under death? God gives us up to death. Why, are we under Satans government? he is Gods executioner, Gods serjeant, he gives us up to him here, because we offend him. Why are we under damnation and wrath? because God is offended. All our slavery comes originally from God; however it be sinfull in regard of Satan that keepes us; yet the power whereby he keepes us is good: for he doth it from God. His will is alwayes naught, but his power is alwayes lawfull: therefore the power whereby the Devill keepes us (if wee looke up to God, under whom the power is) it is a lawfull power: for God hath a hand in giving us up to sinne, it is a judiciall giving up; and then by lusts, and sinne, to Satan and death, and damnation. So if we speake of freedome, wee must not begin with the executioner: the wrath of God must be satisfied; God must be one with us; so as his Justice must have contentment. Satisfaction must be with the glory of his Justice, as well as of his Mercie: his Attributes must have full content, one must not be destroyed to satisfie another; hee must so be mercifull in freeing us, as that content must be given to his Justice, that it complaine not of any losse. Now, reconciliation alway supposeth satisfaction, it is founded upon it.

And satisfaction for sinne, it must be in that nature, that hath sinned: now man of himselfe could not satisfie divine Justice, being

2 *By taking our nature.*

ing a finite person; therefore God the second Person became man, that in our nature hee might satisfie Gods wrath for us, and so free us, by giving payment to his divine Justice. The death of Christ God-man, is the price of our liberty, and freedome.

But why doth the Apostle speake here, of *a Law of the Spirit of life in Christ*, which frees us; but here is no mention of satisfaction by death?

Oh, but death is the foundation of all, as we shall see afterwards. To unfold the point therefore, because it is a speciall point; and the words need unfolding;

Here it is said, there is life } *in Christ.*
A Spirit of life and *a Law of a Spirit of life* }

Life in Christ
1
As God.

There is life in Christ, not onely as God: for so indeed he is life. God, his life is himselfe: for life is the being of a thing, and the actions, and moving, and vigour, and operations of a thing answerable to that being. So the life of God is his being. *As I live saith the Lord*, that is, *as I am God, I will not the death of a sinner.* Now, Christ hath life in him as God, as the Father hath: but that is not especially here meant.

2
As Mediator.

There is life in Christ as God-man, as Mediator. Now, this life is that life, which is originally from the God-head: indeed it is

but

but the God-heads quickening, and giving life to the man-hood in Christ; the Spirit quickning, and sanctifying the man-hood. And we have no comfort by the life of God, as it is in Gods life alone severed: for alas, what communion have wee with God without a Mediator? but our comfort is this, that God, who is the fountaine of life, he became man, and having satisfied Gods Justice, he conveyes life to us, he is our head, hee hath life in himselfe as God, to impart spirituall life to all his members; so there is life in Christ, as Mediator.

And there is a Spirit of life; that life it is a working life: for spirit is an emphaticall word; spirit added to a thing, increased the thing. Againe, he saith, *the Law of the Spirit of life*. *Law*, is a commanding thing; to shew that the life in Christ, it is a commanding life, it countermands all opposite lives whatsoever, of sinne, and death; and this Law is a countermand to all other Lawes; *the Law of the Spirit of life* frees us from all other Lawes. So here is life, the Spirit of life, and the Law of the Spirit of life; all words of strong signification.

But for the cleare understanding of this sweet and comfortable point: First, consider how the Law of the Spirit of life is in Christ, what it doth in him; and then how it is derivatively in us.

First of all, we must know this for a ground, *All in Christ first.* what-

whatsoever is done to us, is done to Christ first, and whatsoever wee have, Christ hath it first. Therefore life is first in Christ, and then in us; Resurrection, first in Christ, and then in us; Sonne-ship, first in Christ, and then in us; Justification from our sins, first in Christ, (he is freed from our sinnes) and then in us: Ascension first in Christ, and then in us: Glory in heaven first in Christ, and then in us. We have nothing in us, but it is derived from Christ: therefore this being layd as a ground, we must consider how the Spirit of life works in Christ, what it doth in Christ; and then what it doth as it is in us: for whatsoever Christ hath, it is not onely for himselfe, but for us.

The Spirit in Christ.

What doth it in Christ?

1 Sanctified his humane nature.

The Spirit of life in Christ, first of all it did quicken, and sanctifie his humane nature; that nature that Christ pleased to take upon him, it stopped sinne, it made a stop of originall sinne, in sanctifying that blessed masse, out of which his body was made, for the foundation of his obedience actuall, that it was so holy, it was hence, that his nature was purified by the Holy-Ghost, in the wombe of the Virgin: the foundation, that his death, and sufferings was satisfactory, and acceptable, it was that his holy nature was sanctified by the Spirit of God. So the first worke of the Spirit of life, in the Sonne of God,

it

it was to ſanctifie, and quicken that bleſſed maſſe, that he tooke upon him.

And the Spirit of life that quickned, and ſanctified our nature in Chriſt, did likewiſe ennoble our nature: for even as a baſe woman is ennobled, when ſhe is taken in marriage with a great man, ſhee hath his dignity accounted hers: ſo our nature by the Spirit being ſanctified, is knit into the union of perſon with Chriſt; that our nature and the ſecond Perſon, make one Chriſt, ſo our nature by the Spirit, is ennobled by this union. And alſo inriched it with all grace, that our nature is capable of: for the nature of *Chriſt* had this double prerogative above ours: Firſt of all, that bleſſed maſſe of fleſh it was knit to be one perſon with God; and then that nature was inriched, and ennobled with all graces above ours. And this the Spirit of life did to *Chriſt* himſelfe, to his humane nature that he tooke upon him, that hee might be a publicke Perſon. For God the ſecond Perſon, tooke not upon him any mans particular perſon, of *Peter*, or *Paul*, or *Iohn*: for then there ſhould have beene diſtinct perſons, one perſon ſhould have dyed, and another riſe: but hee tooke our nature into his Perſon; ſo that the ſame Perſon that did dye was God, though he dyed in our nature; that he might be a publicke Perſon. So we muſt conſider *Chriſt* ſanctifying our nature, that he might fit and ſanctifie all our perſons.

2 *Ennobled it.*

3 *Inriched it.*

But did the Spirit of life doe nothing else, but sanctifie and inrich the humane nature of *Christ* with grace?

4 *Fitted him for his Sacrifice.* Iohn 17.

Yes; for the Spirit of life in *Christ*, did sanctifie him for his Sacrifice, as he saith *Iohn 17.* in that blessed prayer, *I sanctifie my selfe for them:* it prepared him for his death, and made him a fit Sacrifice. When he entred upon his calling, he had more of the Spirit: the Spirit of life, as it were was increased. For it is no heresie to thinke, that the gifts of *Christ* (for the manifestation of them) were increased. For in every state he was in hee was perfect; and when he set upon his Office, and was baptised, hee was fuller of the Holy Ghost: (as it were) there was a fuller manifestation then before, when he did not set upon his Office openly.

5 *Supported him in death.*

In his death, what did the Spirit of life then? It supported him in his very death: for there was an union of the Spirit, when there was a separation of his soule and body, there was not a separation of the union. That which gave dignity, and strength, and value, and worth to his death, it was the Spirit; though there was a suspending of the comfort a while, yet there was no separation of the union, but I speake no more of that, being not especially meant here.

6 *In raising him.*

But especially in his Resurrection, (which we are now to thinke of by reason of the day, and it is not amisse to take all occasions) especially

especially then, the Spirit of life that had sanctified *Christ*, and quickened him, and inriched his nature, and supported him, and done all; that Spirit of life quickened the dead body of *Christ*, *And he was mightily declared to be the Sonne of God, by the Spirit of sanctification, Rom. 1.4. by his Resurrection from the dead.* The Spirit of life raised him from the dead, and put an end to all that misery that he had undergone before for our sakes. For untill his resurrection, there was (as it were) some conflict, with some enemies of *Christ*, either with Satan, or the world, or with death it selfe: he lay under death three dayes, untill *Christs* body was raised, our enemies were not overcome, Gods wrath was not fully satisfied, (it was not declared to be satisfied at least:) for he being our surety, till he came out of the grave, we could not know that our sinnes were satisfied for. But now, when the Spirit of life in *Christ* comes, and quickens that body of his in the grave, and so doth justifie us, as it is, *Ro. 4. He dyed for our sinnes, and rose againe for our justification*; that is, by the Spirit of life in *Christ*, quickning his dead body, hee declared that we are fully discharged from our sinnes, because he was fully discharged from our sinnes; being our surety, hee shewed by his Resurrection, that he was fully discharged from all that he tooke upon him. (When a man comes out of prison, that is a surety, his very comming out of prison shewes, that he hath a full discharge

Rom. 1. 4.

Rom. 4.

discharge of all the debt hee undertooke to pay: so the Spirit of life, raising *Christs* body the third day; manifestly declared, that the debt he tooke on him, was fully discharged: and so as he dyed for sinne, to satisfie Gods Justice for them; so hee rose againe for our justification, to shew that hee had a full discharge for all.

Now, since the Spirit of life in *Christ Iesus*, hath quickned his body; the soule may make a bold demand to God, as it is in 1 *Pet.* 8. It may make that demand, *Rom.* 8. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? it is Christ that dyed, nay rather, that is risen againe*; and ascended into heaven, and makes intercession for us. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods people?* it is *God that justifieth, who shall condemne?* our sinnes? *Christ* hath taken our sinnes upon him, and satisfied divine Justice for them; and by the Spirit of life, hath quickned that dead body of his, that was surety for us himselfe; we may well say, *who shall lay any thing to our charge?* he that is our surety is dead; dead? nay risen againe, nay, ascended, and sits at the right hand of God. Therefore now, the conscience of any Christian, may make that interrogation, and bold demand there; it may stand out any, that dares to oppose the peace of his conscience now; that he may say, who is it? it is God-man that dyed, it is *Christ* that dyed in our nature, and hath raised that nature of ours againe, and is at the right hand

1 Pet. 3.

of

of God, who shall lay any thing to our charge? The Spirit of life in *Christ*, quickning him, hath quickned us together with him; so that now we may boldly demand, we are freed from our sinnes, because our surety is free from all.

What Christ did, was for us.

All this was for our good; what *Christ* did, it was not for himselfe, but for us: and in his birth, and life, and death, and resurrection, we must consider him as a publicke person, and so goe along with all that hee did as a publicke person. Whatsoever may be terrible to us, we must looke upon it, first in *Christ*. If we looke upon the corruption, and defilement in our nature; looke upon the pure nature of *Christ*, his nature was sanctified in his birth, and he is a publicke person; therefore this is for me; and though I be defiled in my owne nature, and carry the remainders of corruption about me; yet the Spirit of life in *Christ* sanctified his nature, and there is more sanctity in him, then there can be sinne in me.

To see our ill in Christ.

When we looke upon our sinnes, let us not so much looke upon them in our consciences, as in our surety *Christ*. When wee looke upon death, looke not upon it in our selves, in its owne visage; but as it is in *Christ* undergone, and conquered; for the power of the Spirit of life in *Christ*, overcame death in himselfe first; and for us; and will overcome in us in time. When the wrath of God is on our consciences, looke not upon it, as it is in our

our ſelves, but as undergone by *Chriſt*; and as *Chriſt* by the Spirit of life, now in him is raiſed up, not from death alone, but from all terrours. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* See *Chriſt* by the Spirit of life quickened from all, not onely bare naturall death, but from all enemies thou needeſt to feare: from the Law, it is nayled to his Croſſe, hee now triumphs over it; and from ſinne; hee was a Sacrifice for it: and from the wrath of God, he hath ſatisfied it, or elſe he had not come out of his grave. So whatſoever is terrible, look on it in *Chriſt* firſt, & ſee a full diſcharge of all that may affright thy conſcience, and trouble thy peace any way. See him in his death, dying for every man, that will beleeve. Conſider him in his reſurrection as a publike perſon, not riſing himſelfe alone, but for all us; therefore in 1 *Pet.* 1. There is an excellent place, *Bleſſed be God, the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who hath begotten us againe, to a lively hope by the reſurrection of Ieſus Chriſt; to an inheritance immortall, undefiled, &c.* and ſo goe along with him to his Aſcenſion, and ſee our ſelves ſitting *with him in heavenly places*, as Saint *Paul* ſpeakes, oh, this is a ſweet meditation of *Chriſt*! to ſee our ſelves in him, in all the paſſages of his birth, and life, and death, and reſurrection, and aſcenſion, to glory in heaven: for all that he did, was as a publicke perſon, as the ſecond *Adam*. But now, before the Spirit of life in *Chriſt* come to free me; I, and

To ſee Chriſts good for us.

1 Pet. 1.

Chriſt

Christ must be one, there must be an union betweene me and *Christ*, I must be a member of *Christ* mysticall. For as *Christ* quickened his owne body, every joynt when it was dead, because it was his body: so he quickens his mysticall body, every member of it: but I must be a member first, I must not be my selfe, severed from *Christ*. Therefore the Law of the Spirit of life, which is in *Christ*, the first thing it doth, (next to impetration, and obtaining of happinesse) it workes application; for these two goe together, impetration and application. *Christ* by his death obtained all good, and by his resurrection hee declared it: but there must be an application to me. Now this Spirit of life which is in *Christ*, which quickened him, and raised him up; (and all for my good) must apply this to me.

The Spirit works application.

The grace of application it is faith, therefore this must be wrought in the next place. How doth the Law of the Spirit of life free me? because first it freed *Christ*, therefore me: but that is not enough, except there be application. Therefore the Law of the Spirit of life workes faith in me, to knit me to *Christ*, to make me beleeve, that all that hee hath done is mine: and the same power that raised *Christ* from the dead, workes the power of faith, and application. For wee must not thinke, that it is an easie thing for a carnall man to beleeve, to goe out of himselfe, that it is salvation enough to have salvation, by the obedi-

Faith the grace of application.

obedience of another man: No; both in the *Ephesians*, and *Colossians*, in divers places, it is S. *Pauls* phrase, that the *same power that raised Christ from the dead*, must raise our hearts, and worke faith in them. For as the good things that faith layes hold on, are wondrous good things, even above admiration almost: that poore flesh and blood, a piece of earth, should be an heire of heaven, a member of *Christ*, that it should be above Angels in dignity; as the things are superexcellent things, even above admiration (in a manner:) so the grace that beleeves these things, it is a strange and excellent, and admirable grace, that is faith. Therefore faith must be wrought by the Law of the Spirit of *Christ*; by the ministery of the Gospell. This is the grace of application, when a man goes out of himselfe; when he sees himselfe first in bondage to his corruptions, to Satan, and to death: and then sees the excellent way that God hath wrought in *Christ*, to bring him out of that cursed estate: then hee hath by the Spirit of life faith wrought in him. And indeed the same power, and Spirit that quickened *Christ* from the dead, must quicken our hearts to beleeve in *Christ*. It is a miracle to bring the heart of man to beleeve. Wee thinke it an easie matter to beleeve: (indeed it is an easie matter to presume, to have a conceite) but for the soule in the time of temptation, and in the houre of death, for the guilty soule, to goe out of it selfe, and cast it

selfe

ſelfe upon the mercy of God, who is juſtly offended, and to beleeve that the obedience of *Chriſt* is mine, as verily as if I had obeyed my ſelfe: here muſt be a ſtrong ſanctified judgement, and a mighty power to raiſe the ſoule, to caſt it ſelfe ſo upon Gods mercy in *Chriſt*. So that beſides the obtaining ſaluation by *Chriſt*, there muſt be a grace to apply it, and this faith doth.

How faith is ſaid to doe that that Chriſt doth.

Faith is ſaid to doe that that *Chriſt* doth, becauſe faith layes hold upon *Chriſt*, what faith doth, *Chriſt* doth, and what *Chriſt* doth, faith doth: therefore it hath the ſame actions applyed, and given to it, that *Chriſt* hath. Faith is ſaid to ſave us: you know it is *Chriſt* that ſaves us: but faith layes hold on *Chriſt*, that ſaves us: faith purgeth the heart, and overcomes the world: *Chriſt* by his Spirit doth all this: but becauſe faith wrought by the Spirit, is ſuch a grace, as layes hold on the power of *Chriſt*, it goes out of it ſelfe to *Chriſt*: therefore what *Chriſt* doth, faith is ſaid to doe. So then the Law of the Spirit of life in *Chriſt*, not onely freed *Chriſt* himſelfe, by his Reſurrection: but likewiſe by the ſame power, whereby hee rayſed himſelfe, he rayſeth our hearts to beleeve what hee hath done, both in his ſtate of humiliation, and exaltation, and makes all that *Chriſt* did ours.

The Spirit of life in *Chriſt Ieſus*, working faith in us, and by faith other graces, doth free

free us from the Law of sinne, and death, *Christ* doth it, and faith doth it, and grace which issues from faith doth it, subordinately. *Christ* doth it by way of merit: and by his Spirit, working faith in us, to lay hold upon whatsoever *Christ* hath done or suffered, as if we had done it our selves, so it frees us from the law of sinne, and death; because it layes hold of the freedome wrought by *Christ* for us. But besides, and next to faith, there is a Spirit of sanctification, by which we are free from the commanding law of sinne, and death: But to cleare all this, consider there is a freedome in this life, and in the life to come from sinne and from death. A freedome in this life, in calling, in justification, in sanctification; and in the life to come a freedome of glory.

Freedome double.

1 *In this life.*

2 *In effectuall calling.*

There is a freedome in effectuall calling, by the ministerie of the Gospel: the Gospel being preached, & unfolded, faith is wrought whereby wee know what *Christ* hath done for us, and wee see a better condition in *Christ*, then we are in by nature; seeing by the Spirit of God, the cursed estate wee are in, we are convinced of sinne in our selves, and of the good that is in *Christ*, and hereupon wee are called out of the thraldome wee are in by nature, by the Spirit of *Christ*, and the Word of God, unfolding what our condition is: for man by nature having selfe-love in him, and that selfe-love being turned the right way, he begins to thinke; I, doth the Word of God say,

I am

I am a slave to sinne and damnation? the Word of God can judge better then my selfe, and then the Spirit of God sets it on with conviction, that undoubtedly this is true. And together, with the cursed kingdome and slavery that I am under, there is discovered a better state in *Christ*: for the Gospel tells us what we are in *Christ*; freed from hell, and death, and heires of heaven: oh the happy estate of a Christian to be in *Christ*! The Gospel, with the Spirit discovering this, a man is called out of the cursed estate he is in by nature, to the fellow-ship of *Christ*, by faith, which is wrought in this calling: so that now he comes to be a member of *Christ* by faith, so that whatsoever *Christ* hath, or is, or hath done or suffered, it is mine by reason of this union with him by faith, which is the grace of union that knits us to *Christ*, and the first grace of application. So there is the first degree of liberty, and freedome wrought by the Spirit of God, together with the Gospel in effectuall calling.

2 *In justification.*

The second is in justification, that faith and beleefe in *Christ*, that was wrought in effectuall calling, it frees me from the guilt of my sinnes. For when the Gospel (in effectuall calling) discovers, that *Christ* is such a one, and that there is such an estate in *Christ*; and there is faith wrought in me: then that faith layes hold upon the obedience of *Christ* to be mine. For *Christ* in the Gospel offers his obe-

dience to be mine, as if I had done it in mine own person; whatsoever *Christ* did or suffered is mine: for he is made of God, to be *Wisedome, righteousnesse, sanctification, and redemption*, to be all in all; the Gospell sets him forth to be so. Now faith laying hold of *Christ*, to be made of God all in all, obedience, *righteousnesse, &c.* whatsoever is needfull, hereupon this faith justifies me, hereupon I come to be free from the guilt of my sinnes, because my sinnes were laid upon *Christ*. *Christs* death, was the death of a surety; it was as if I had dyed my selfe, and more firme; thus I come to be free in justification: for what my surety hath done, I have done.

In sanctification.

Againe, there is a freedome in sanctification, that is, when a man beleeves that *Christ* is his, and that his sufferings are his, then the same Spirit that discovers this to be mine, it workes a change and alteration in my nature, and frees me from the dominion of sinne. The obedience of *Christ*, frees me from the condemnation of sinne, and the Spirit of sanctification frees me from the dominion of sinne. This is the freedome of sanctification, which faith layes hold on, *whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his*. *Christ* as a head, derives to me the holy Spirit, to sanctifie my nature, and *of his fulnesse, we receive grace for grace*; so the Spirit of sanctification in *Christ* frees me from the dominion of sinne and death.

To be free from the law of sinne and death, what?

It is said here, that by *Christ* we have spirituall liberty and freedome, not from sinne, and death, but from the law of sinne, and of death. It is one thing to be freed from sinne, and death, and another thing to be freed from the *law* of them: for wee are not indeed freed from sinne, and death, but from the law of sinne, and death; that is, from the condemning power of sinne; that though sinne be in us; yet it doth not condemne us: and though we die, yet the sting is pulled out, death is but a passage to a better life. So I say in Justification, wee are freed from the condemning power of sinne, and in sanctification, from the commanding power of sinne. When we are knit once to *Christ*, we have the obedience of *Christ*, ours in justification: and the holinesse of *Christ* is derived to us, as from the head to the members in sanctification, and so we are freed from the law of sin. To understand this a little better, the same Spirit that sanctified the naturall body, the humane nature of *Christ*, wherby he *became bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh*: the same Spirit doth sanctifie the mysticall body of *Christ*, that it may be *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh*. For before wee come to heaven, *Christ* must not onely *be bone of our bone, &c.* that is, in his Incarnation, but wee must be *bone of his bone, &c.* that is, wee must have natures like *Christ*, not onely flesh and blood; for (so a reprobate hath flesh and blood, as *Christ* hath) but wee must have

his Spirit altering and changing our nature, that instead of a proud, disobedient, rebellious nature, now it must be a holy and humble, and meeke nature; (together with humane frailty, for that we carry about with us;) then the Spirit of life derived from *Christ*, makes us *bone of his bone*. For indeed, in his humane nature, being *bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh*, hee made us *bone of his bone*, and *flesh of his flesh*: he became man, that we might partake of the divine nature, being partakers of the divine Spirit. So that now the Spirit of life in *Christ*, when we are knit to him, is a Spirit of sanctification, altering our natures, and working in our hearts a disposition like *Christs*; that wee judge, as *Christ* judgeth, and chuse, as *Christ* chuseth, and ayme at Gods glory as *Christ* did. For there is *the same mind in us, that was in Christ*, *Philip.* 2. In our proportion, growing still more and more, to conformity with *Christ*, till we be in heaven, till *Christ be all in all*, 1 *Cor.* 15. When he will change our nature to be holy as his owne.

Philip. 2.

1 Cor. 15.

2 *In the life to come.*

Besides this liberty from sinne, and death in this life, there is a glorious liberty, and freedome that we have by the Spirit of *Christ*, when we are dead: for then the Spirit of life that raised *Christs* dead body, will raise our bodies, and that Spirit of *Christ* that raiseth his body, and raiseth our soules in this world from sinne to beleeve in him, will raise our dead bodies. The same vertue, and power, that

that workes in Christ, workes in his members: this is called, *The glorious libertie of the Sonnes of God.* Then wee shall befreed indeed, not onely from the law of sinne, but from sinne it selfe, and not onely from the law of death, but death it selfe, and *wee shall live for ever with the Lord.* Christ then *shall be all in all by his Spirit.* Christ will never leave us, till hee have brought us to that glorious freedome: wee are freed already from sinne, and death, he hath *set us in heavenly places, together with himselfe*, now; In faith we are there already: but then wee shall be indeed. Thus you see how we come to have the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, to free us from the law of sinne, and death, and all the passages of it.

Vse.
Comfort against rebellion of lusts.

You see here that there is law against law. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ, against the law of sinne, and death. I beseech you consider that God hath appointed law, to countermand law, the Spirit of Christ to overcome sinne in us, not onely in justification, but in sanctification; oh, let us therefore comfortably thinke, there is a Law above this Law. I have now cold, dead, base affections: but if I have the Spirit of Christ, he can quicken, and enliven me, hee will not onely pardon my sinne: but by the Law of his Spirit direct, guid, and command me a contrary way to my lusts. And this is an Art of spirituall prudence in heavenly things, whensoever wee are beset with dangers, to set

reater then that againſt it. The Devill is an Angell; but we have a guard of Angels about us. The Devill is a Serpent: but we have a brazen Serpent that cures all the ſtings of that Serpent. We have Principalities and Powers againſt, but we have greater Principalities and Powers for us. The Law of life, againſt the law of ſinne and death. We have a law of our luſts tyrannizing over us, and enthralling us; it is true: but then there is a Law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, to overcome, and ſubdue that law of our luſts, if ſo be that wee uſe the prerogatives wee have, if we uſe faith, and goe to God, and Chriſt, in whom are all the treaſures of grace. Hee is the treaſury of the Church, *of his fulneſſe we receive grace for grace.* Are we troubled with any corruptions? goe to the Spirit of liberty in Chriſt, and deſire him to ſet us at liberty from the bondage, and thraldome of our corruptions. And remember what Chriſt hath done for us, and where hee is now, in heaven: let us raiſe our thoughts, that wee may ſee our ſelves in heaven already; that wee may be aſhamed to defile our bodies and ſoules (with the baſe drudgery of ſinne, and Satan,) that are ſanctified in part in this world, and ſhall be glorified in heaven. Certainely faith would raiſe our ſoules ſo: we betray our ſelves, when being once in the ſtate of grace, we are inthralled baſely to any ſinne. *For ſinne ſhall not have dominion over you, becauſe you are under grace,* ſaith the

How to uſe our prerogatives.

the Apostle. Being under grace, if wee doe but use our reasoning, and use faith, and exercise the grace we have given us, wee cannot be in thrall to corruptions. Wee shall have remainders to trouble us: but not to rule, and reigne, and domineere. For sinne never beares sway, but when wee betray our selves, and either beleeve not what *Christ* hath done for us, or else exercise not our faith. A Christian is never overtaken basely, but when hee neglects his priviledges, and prerogatives, and doth not stirre up the grace of God in him.

Learne this then, when we are troubled with any thing, set Law against Law, set the Law of the Spirit of life in *Christ*, against all oppositions whatsoever, and let the temptation lie where it will: set it lie in justification, as when wee are tempted by Satan to despaire for sinnes, for great sinnes, oh but then consider: the Law of the Spirit of life in *Christ*, hath *freed me from the law of sinne, and of death.* *Christ* was made sinne, to free me from sinne. Consider that *Christ* was God-man, hee satisfied divine Justice, *the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sinne, though they be as red as crimson.* Thus set *Christ* against our sinnes in justification, when the guilt of them troubles our soules. And so likewise, when wee are set on by base lusts, set against them the power of *Christ* in sanctification. What am I now? a member of *Christ*, one

Comfort in temptations.

1
To despaire.

2
Temptation by lusts.

that professeth my selfe to be an heire of heaven: there is a Spirit of life in *Christ* my head, there is a Law of the Spirit of life in *Christ*; that is, there is a commanding power in his Spirit, and that Spirit of his is not onely in the head, but in the members. If I goe to him for grace, I may have grace, answerable to the grace that is in him; grace that will strengthen me with his power: *be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might*, *Ephes. 6.* and in *Christ I can doe all things*, by his Spirit, though in my selfe I can doe nothing.

Ephes. 6.

3 *Deadnesse of Spirit.*

And so in deadnesse, and desolation of Spirit, when the soule is cast downe with discomfort, let us thinke with our selves, the Spirit of life in *Christ*, is a quickening Spirit, if I can beleeve in *Christ*, he hath freed me from the guilt of sinne, and hee hath by his Spirit, given me some little inlargement from the dominion of my corruptions, why should I be cast downe? I am an heire of heaven; ere long Satan shall *be trodden under my feet*; ere long I shall be free from the spirituall combate, and conflict with sinne, that I am now encountred with; therefore I will comfort my selfe, I will not be cast downe overmuch.

4 *In the houre of death.*

In the houre of death, let us make use of this freedome of the Spirit of life in *Christ Iesus* from the law of sinne, and death. When the time comes, that there must be a separation of soule, and body; oh let us thinke with

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our ſelves; Now I muſt dye, yet *Chriſt* hath dyed, and I muſt dye in conformity to my head, and here is my comfort: the Law of the Spirit of life, hath freed me from the law of death, it hath freed me from ſpirituall, and eternall death. So that now through *Chriſt*, death is become friendly to me; death now is not the death of me, but death will be the death of my miſery, the death of my ſinnes, it will be the death of my corruptions, death now will be the death of all that before troubled me: but death will be my birth day, in regard of happineſſe; *Better is the day of death, then the day of birth.* When a man comes into this life, he comes into miſery; but when he dies, hee goes out of miſery, and comes to happineſſe; ſo that indeed, wee never live till we dye, wee never live eternally, and happily till then: for then wee are freed from all miſery, and ſinne. *Bleſſed are they that dye in the Lord, they reſt from their labours*; they reſt from the labours of toyle, and miſery, they reſt from the labours of ſinne; from all labours whatſoever. *Bleſſed are they that dye in the Lord*, and of all times then bleſſed; more bleſſed then before, they reſt from their labours, and then begins their happineſſe, that ſhall never end. So you ſee what comfort a Chriſtians ſoule ſprinkled with the blood of *Chriſt*, may have if, it goe to God in *Chriſt*, and begge of Chriſt to be ſet at liberty, from all enemies, to ſerve God in holines and righteouſneſſe.

I ſpeake

We are not onely freed from ill, but advanced to good.

I speake too meanely, when I say, the Law of the Spirit of life, hath freed us from sinne, and death: this is not all; the Spirit of life, not onely frees us from ill, but advanceth us to the contrary good in every thing, wherein this freedome is. For we are not onely called out of misery, but to a Kingdome: wee are not onely freed from sinne, but intitled to heaven, in justification: and in sanctification, we are not onely freed from corruption, but inabled by the holy Spirit of liberty, to run the wayes of Gods Commandements, and make them voluntary, to serve God cheerefully *zealous of good workes*; wee are not onely freed from the command, and condemnation of sinne, and the rigour of the Law: but we have contrary dispositions, ready, and willing, and voluntary dispositions wrought by the Spirit of *Christ*, to every thing that is good. And so wee are not onely free from death and misery, (for so things without life are, they suffer no misery) but wee are partakers of everlasting life, and glory, the liberty of glory. Gods benefits are compleat, that is, not onely priuative, freeing us from ill; but positive, implying all good: because God will shew himselfe a God: he will doe good things as a God, fully. For the Law of the Spirit of life, not onely frees us from the law of sinne, and of death: but *writes the Law of God in our hearts*: he not onely frees us from the law of death; but advance

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us to everlasting life, to the glorious life we have in heaven, *to live for ever with the Lord:* oh happy condition of a Christian! if wee could know our happinesse.

Let us often meditate deepely of *Christ*, and of our selves in him, let us see all our ill in him; and all our good in him: see death overcome, and sinne overcome by his death, hee being made a curse for us: see the Law overcome, hee being made under the Law for us: when the wrath of God vexeth, and terrifieth us, see it upon him; *Hee sweat water and blood in the Garden.* It made him crie out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* See all that may trouble us in him, as our Surety. And all the good wee hope for, see it in *Christ* first: whatsoever he hath in his naturall body, it is for his mysticall body; for hee gave his naturall body for his mysticall. God, in the world to humble us, exerciseth us with troubles and calamities, as he did *Christ*: wee must be conformable to our head: but consider the poyson, and sting of all ills wee need to feare, is swallowed up, and taken away by *Christ*. And as I said, let us see all our good in him, wee are sonnes in him, raysed in him, blessed in him, set in heavenly places with him, and shall be follow-heires, and Kings with him; for wee are his members, his Spouse, the wife shall enjoy the same condition as the husband, whatsoever hee hath she shall have. What a comfortable

fortable estate is this! we can feare no ill, nor want no good; whatsoever hee hath, it is for us: hee was borne for us: hee dyed for us, hee is gone to heaven for us, for us, and our good, hee did, and suffered all these things: We cannot exercise our thoughts too much in these meditations.

Application to the Sacrament.

The Lords Supper is a Sacrament of union and communion, hence it hath its name; and by receiving the Sacrament our Communion, and union with *Christ*, is strengthned. What a comfort then is it to thinke, if I have fellowship with *Christ*, it is sealed by the Sacrament? when I take the Bread, and Wine, at the same time I have communion with the Body, and Blood of *Christ* shed for my sinnes; and as *Christ* himselfe, was freed from my sinnes, imputed to him, and by his Resurrection declared that hee was freed: so surely shall I be freed from my sinnes. So that this Communion, taking the Bread and Wine, it seales to us our Communion, and fellowship with *Christ*, and thereupon our freedome from sinne, and from the Law, and sets us in a blessed, and happy estate. Wee should labour therefore, by all meanes to strengthen our union, and Communion with *Christ*; and amongst the rest, reverently and carefully, attend upon this blessed Ordinance of God: for the body of *Christ* broken, doth quicken us; because it is the body of the Sonne of God.

My

My flesh is meate indeed, and my blood is drinke indeed: and hee calls his body broken, *the bread of life*, Why? becauſe it was the body of the Sonne of God, *who is life*, *Iob* 6. All life comes from God. Now *Chriſt* taking our nature upon him, his death is a quickning death: and by reaſon of the union with the divine nature, now, it is the body of God broken, and the blood of God ſhed for us, (there is our comfort,) and hee was declared to be ſo by his Reſurrection, that declared that he was God, and that hee was freed from our ſinnes. Powerfull muſt that Saviour needs be, that was ſo ſtrong in his very death, when his very body was broken, and his blood let out: then hee did worke the foundation of all comfort: for then hee ſatiſfied the wrath of God. *Chriſt* was ſtrongeſt when hee was weakeſt. The Reſurrection was but a declaration of the worth of that hee had done.) Now, in the Sacrament wee have Communion with *Chriſt* dying, eſpecially, as his body is broken, and his blood ſhed: for that is the foundation of all comfort by his Reſurrection. And becauſe the Spirit of life was in *Chriſt*, and did quicken his body while hee was alive, and was a Spirit of life, even when hee dyed, and gave worth, and excellency to his death: therefore, when wee take the Communion, wee ought not to meditate meerely of the death of *Chriſt*, as his blood was ſhed, and his body

dy broken: but of the death of such a person, as had the Spirit of life in him, as was God and man: and so set the excellency of his person, against all temptations whatsoever. Set the excellency of *Christ* so abased, his body broken, and his blood shed, against all temptations, if it be the greatest; the wrath of God upon the conscience; yet when conscience thinkes this, God the party offended, gave his owne Sonne to be Incarnate, and the Spirit of life in him, did quicken mans nature, and in that nature, did die for satisfaction: now, God will be satisfied by the death of such a Surety, as his owne Sonne: so that the excellency of the Person, having the Seale of God upon him (*For him hath God the Father sealed*) doth wondrously satisfie conscience in all temptations whatsoever. What need a man feare death and damnation, and the miseries of this life, and Satan? what are all? if God be appeased and reconciled in *Christ*, then a man hath comfort, and may thinke of all other enemies, as conquered enemies. Now we cannot thinke of the death of *Christ*, who was a *quickening Spirit*: but wee must thinke of the death of an excellent person, that gave worth to his death, to be a satisfactory death for us. Therefore let us receive the Communion with comfort, that as verily as *Christ* is mine, so his quickening Spirit is communicated to me, and whatsoever he hath is mine:

Iohn 6.

If

If I have the field, I have the Pearle in it, his obedience, his victory over death, his Sonship is mine, his sitting in heaven is for me, he sits there to rule me, while I am on earth, and to take me up to himselfe when I am dead, all is for me : when wee have Communion with *Christ*, wee have communion with all: Therefore the *Spirit of life in Christ Iesus* (when I am one with him, it quickens me) and *frees me from the law of sinne and death.*

FINIS.

If I have the field, I have the Pearle in it, his obedience, his victory over death, his Sonship is mine, his living in heaven is for me, he is there to rule me, while I am on earth, and to take me up to himselfe when I am dead, all is for me: when wee have Communion with Christ, wee have communion with all. Therefore the Spirit of life in Christ (when I am one with him, it quickens me) and frees me from the law of sinne and death.

SAINT PAULS CHALLENGE.

In one Sermon.

By

The late learned and reverend Divine,

RICH. SIBBS:

Doctor in Divinitie, Mr of *Katherine Hall* in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher at GRAYES-INNE.

PSAL. 27. 3:

Though an Hoſt ſhould encampe againſt me, my heart ſhall not feare; though warre ſhould riſe againſt me, In this will I be confident.

LONDON,
Printed by *E. P.* for *Nicholas Bourne*, and *Rapha Harford*,
1638.

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PSAL. 37. 3.

Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

LONDON,

Printed by T. for Nicholas Bourne, and Rafe Mabb, 1638.

SAINT PAULS CHALLENGE.

Rom. 8. 30.

What shall wee then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

THE words are a glorious conclusion, and triumph of faith: the conclusion upon all the former particulars in the Chapter, and the foundation of all the comforts that follow after, to the end of the Chapter. They are as the center of the Chapter: all the beames of heavenly comfort in this divine Chapter, they meete as it were in one, in this short clause, *what shall we say then to these things, &c.*

In the words briefly, there is, first a question, *what shall we say to these things?*

And then a triumph, *If God be with us, who can be against us?* It is a question answered with another question, *what shall wee say to these things?* He answers it with another question, *If God be with us, who can be against us?*

what ſhall we ſay to theſe things?

To theſe things before mentioned: If wee be in *Chriſt*, there is no condemnation to us: if wee be led by the Spirit; if we be heires of heaven, and fellow heires with *Chriſt*, if we ſuffer with him, if we have the ſpirit of prayer to helpe our infirmities in the worſt conditions, if all creatures groane with us, and if all worke for our good; if God from all eternity hath written our names in heaven by election, and ſeparated us from the reſt of the world in vocation, and hath ſanctified, and juſtified us, and will after glorifie us; *what ſhall wee ſay to theſe things?*

The heart of man is full of doubtings, and miſgiving, full of thoughts, *According to the multitude of my thoughts, thy comforts refreſhed my ſoule*, a multitude of thoughts, and a multitude of comforts; there is comfort after comfort, becauſe there are thoughts after thoughts, and ſurmiſes after ſurmiſes. There is no waſt comfort ſet down in this Chapter; and when he hath ſet down all, he comes, and concludes in a triumphant manner, *what ſhall wee ſay to theſe things?* He propounds the *quære* to himſelfe, he catechiſeth his own heart, and others, if theſe things be ſo, what can be ſayd againſt them? Surely the unbeleeving, doubting, darke, rebellious heart of man, hath many things to ſay againſt divine truths, for though divine truths be lighter then the Sunne, and

there

there is no greater evidence of any thing in the world; yet they find no place in the unbeleeving heart. Let God say what he will, the doubting heart is ready to gain-say it: but these truths are so pregnant and cleare, that it is a wonder, that any thing should be said against them, *What shall we say to these things?*

2. *To shew the greatnesse of our priviledges.*

Againe he meanes, what comfort can you have more? what can you desire more? what can be said more? what use will you make of all that hath beene said? what will you sucke out of it? If all this be true that hath beene spoken before; that a Christian is so elevated above the common condition: if God love him from everlasting in election, and to everlasting in glorification; if in the middle time, all shall worke for the best; what comfort can the heart of man desire more? and what use can you make of this for courage, and for comfort for the time to come? these things are implyed in this question, *What shall we say to these things?*

Vse.

It is good to propound quæres to our selves.

It is good, often to propound *quæres* and demands to our owne hearts, when we read or heare divine truths, to aske our owne hearts, you have heard these things, what say you to them? For whatsoever God saith in his Word, will doe us no good, till we speake to our owne hearts, and be convinced of it, and say it is so: therefore wee should say to our selves, here are many comforts, and duties pressed; but what sayest thou to it, my

heart, doſt thou not ſtand out againſt comforts, and advice? It is no matter what God ſaith, unleſſe he over-power the unbeleeving heart, to ſay, *what ſhall I ſay to theſe things?* ſhall I not agree with God, and his Spirit, and his comforts? ſhall they be beſt in regard of an unbeleeving heart? oh, no, Therefore let our care be, to ſtore them in the treaſury of our memory, which ſhould be like the pot of *Mannah*, to containe heavenly comforts: let us treaſure up all the truths we can, all will be little enough, when we ſhall need comfort. But when we have them in our memory, let us aske our ſelves, are theſe things ſo, or no? If they be ſo, beleeve them, if they be not ſo, then let us give liberty to our ſelves, and away with hearing, and reading, &c. If they be ſo, for ſhame let me yeeld to them.

Let us aske theſe queſtions with ſome fruit, let us deale thus with our owne hearts, often call them to account, whether we beleeve or no; for wee have ſuch a faculty, and power, we can reflect upon our ſelves. And we ought to deſire of the Spirit of God, to teach our hearts, to reflect upon them ſelves, to examine whether wee know, and if wee know, whether we beleeve, and what uſe wee make of theſe things, and why we ſhould live thus; doth this life, and courſe of mine, agree with theſe principles? The beſt of us all are tardy this way; therefore let not that part,

without

without making some use of it. But I proceed to that, I will more dwell on.

If God be for us, who can be against us?

Here is first a ground layd, and then a comfort built upon it. The ground that is layd, is, *If God be with us?* when he saith, *If God be with us?* he doth not put the case, but layes it as a ground; *If God be with us?* as indeed he is with all his, in electing them, in calling them, in working all for their good, in glorifying them after, &c. *If God be with us*, as he is, then this comfort is built upon this ground, *Who shall, or can be against us?*

For the first, the ground that is laid, is that,

God is with his children.

God is with his children,

Indeed hee is with the whole world, hee is every where: but he is with his Church, and children, in a more peculiar manner. The soule is spred in the whole body, but it is in the braine after another manner, as it understands, and reasons. God is every where: but he is not every where comforting, and directing, and sanctifying, nor every where giving a sweet and blessed issue. So, besides the generall respect, that I will not now stand on: *God is with us*, that are his, in a more peculiar manner, in all his sweet Attributes: in his wisedome, to direct us; with his power, to assist, and strengthen us; by his grace, and love, to comfort us; and hee is with us, in all our perplexities to stay our soules: hee is with us by

How God is with them.

his sweet, and gracious mercy, to feed us with hidden *Mannah*, with secret comforts in the middest of discomforts: when there is no comfort else with us, then God is with us. And then he is with us, in the issue of all that a godly man takes in hand in his name, hee is with him in all crosses, to direct and tune them to his best good: *All things worke for the best, to them that love God.* He is with them, in all his sweet relations, as a gracious Father in Covenant, as a Husband. He is with them in those sweet comparisons, as a Hen, as an Eagle, to carry them on his wings, above all dangers, as hee carryed the *Israelites* in the wildernesse. He is with them in all comfortable relations.

Therefore God, in the Scriptures borrowes names from every thing that is comfortable. He is with them as a Rocke to build on, as a Shield to defend them: in the time of heate and persecution, he is a shaddow, to keepe them from the heate, hee is with them as a light. *Christ* is our life in death, our light in darkenesse, our righteousnesse in sinfulnesse, and guilt, our holinesse in impurity, our redemption in all our miseries. There is somewhat of God in every creature, therefore God takes names from his owne creatures: because there is some strength or comfort in them, God gives himselfe variety of names, as there are variety of our distresses. Are we in misery? God is a Rock, a Shield, a

Tower of defence, a Buckler: hee is all that can be ſaid for comfort. He is with us in his Attributes, and ſweet relations, and all ſweet termes, that may ſupport our faith; that whatſoever wee ſee comfortable in the creature, we may riſe more comfortably to God, and ſay, God is my Rocke, and Shield, and my light, and defence.

And then God is with us in every condition, and in every place whatſoever; hee is not onely a God of the mountaines, and not of the valleyes, or a God of the valleyes, and not of the mountaines, as thoſe fooliſh people thought; but he is in all places, and at all times with his. If they be in priſon, hee goes with them: *Act. 16. He made the priſon,* a kind of Paradiſe, a heaven. If they be baniſhed into other Countries, he goes with them: *I will goe with thee oh* Jacob, *into* Egypt, *and bring thee backe againe.* If they be in death, he is with us to death, and in death: *In the valley of the ſhadow of death, thou art with me:* at all times whatſoever, and in all conditions, God is with us. Act. 16.

In all our affaires whatſoever, God is with us: *Feare not* Joſua: *Feare not* Moſes: what was the ground of their comfort? *I will be with thee.* Hee was with Saint *Paul* in all conditions, therefore hee bids him *feare not.* So our bleſſed Saviour, the head of all, in *Act.* 10.38. in the ſpeech of *Peter* to *Cornelius,* hee did all things well, *for God was with him:* Act. 10 38.

you

you see how God is with his children.

Ground of it. From Gods free love.

What is the ground, that the great and holy, and pure God, blessed for ever, should be with such sinfull and wretched creatures as we are; that hee should not onely be with us, and about us, and compasse us as a shield, but be in us?

The ground of all, is his free love in *Christ*, *Christ* was God with us first. God that hee might be with us, ordained that *Christ* should be God with us, *Emmanuel*, that hee should take our nature into unity of person with himselfe. *Christ* being God with us, (that he might satisfie the just wrath of God for our sinnes, and so reconcile God, and us together,) he hath made God and us friends: so that this, that God is with us, it is grounded upon an excellent, and sound bottome; upon the Incarnation of our blessed Saviour, that for this very end, that God might be with us, was God with us, that is, he was God and man, to bring God and man together, he was God and man in one, to bring God and man, that were at contrary termes, to termes of reconciliation: to recollect and bring us backe againe to God, from whence we fell. So the reason why God the Father, Sonne, and Holy-Ghost, are with us; it is because *Christ*, the second Person, God and man, is with us: or else there could be no such sweet termes as these are: you see how it is founded. *Christ* took our nature, and advanced and inriched it.

Now

Now, hee having taken our nature, and our persons to be one with him, how neere are *Christ* and we together? There is one common spirit in him and us, one common Father, *I goe to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.* There is one common Kingdome, and inheritance, wee are fellow-heires with him: oh how neere is *Christ* to us! our soules are not so neere our bodies, as *Christ* is to us, and God in *Christ.* So you see this, that God is with us; it is founded upon an excellent, wonderfull, comfortable mysterie. This I suppose is cleare, therefore I come to that I intend further to enlarge, that is, the comfort built upon this ground, *If God be with us,*

Who shall be against us?

The comfort on the former ground.

One would think this a strange question, for a Christian no sooner comes to be one with *Christ*, and so to be reconciled to God, but he hath against him all the powers of hell, and then he hath the whole world against him presently, Satans Kingdome: and then hee hath an enemy that is worst of all, (that stirres up strife and rebellion, and contention, even in his owne heart) his owne flesh. So that we may say, who is not against a Christian? If God be with us, all else but God, will side against us. There are two grand sides in the world, to which all belong: there is Gods side, and those that are his; and there is another side, that is, Satans, and those that are his;

his; two Kingdomes, two ſeeds, two contrary diſpoſitions, that purſue one another, till all the one be in heil: Satan and all his ſeed together, the Devill, and all that fight under his banner, that are led with his malignant, poyſon-full ſpirit; though it may be they cannot doe more hurt or doe not out of politicke reſpects; though they have poyſon-full hearts: yet theſe never leave contending till they be in hell: and the other never leave, till theybe in heaven together. *Chriſt* makes it his prayer, *My will is, that where I am, they may be alſo,* and his will muſt be performed: ſo that he need not aske the queſtion, *If God be with us, who ſhall be againſt us?* there will be enow againſt us.

How farre the enemies of Gods children are againſt them.

It is true; but in what ſenſe are they againſt us, and how farre are they againſt us?

They are thus farre againſt us in their wit, in their plots, and policies; in their wills they would devoure all, if they could: they are againſt us in their indeavours, they doe what they can againſt the Church and people of God. They are againſt us in their prevailing likewiſe: their indeavours are not idle, but prevayle very farre over Gods people, even to inſolency: *where is now their God?* as it is oft in the Pſalmes; and to the dejection of Gods people: *The Lord hath forſaken me; The Lord hath forgotten me.* Gods people are brought very low, to the pits brinke, the pit almoſt ſhuts her mouth upon them. So you ſee they are

againſt them many wayes. God gives a great length to their tether.

And many reaſons *God* hath to let them prevaile, both to draw out their malice the more; and then to ſhew his people their corruptions the more; and then to exerciſe their graces in wayting; and for the juſt confuſion of their enemies at the latter end: and for the ſweet comfort of his children at the end, (when God ſees the fitteſt time to meet with the enemies) that they might have ſweet experience of Gods ſeaſonable care, how ever God put off a long time for ſome reſpects: ſo you ſee they may prevayle, a long time. Yet who can be againſt us in this ſenſe; that is, to prevayle altogether? who ſhall be againſt us, ſo farre as to have their will in the iſſue? They prevayle a great way: what doe they intend? not to prevayle over the perſons of Gods Church and people, but the cauſe which in ſpite of Satan, and his inſtruments, and all muſt ſtand invincible to the end of the world. They intend likewiſe, to prevayle over the courage of Gods people, that they cannot neither: for Saint *Paul* ſaith after in this Chapter, *In all theſe things we are more then conquerours*, that is, abundant conquerours; a ſtrange high terme. But in ſome ſenſe, we are more then conquerours: for if we conſider what weake perſons Gods children are; what ſtrong enemies they have, and what weake meanes they prevayle with in the ſight of the world

Why God ſuffers them to prevaile.

No man can be againſt Gods children.

1 *In reſpect of Chriſts cauſe.*

2 *The courage of his children.*

world, to fleſh and blood, that ſuch perſons, ſhould prevayle over ſuch enemies, by ſuch weake meanes as they doe, in this reſpect, they are more then conquerours. So he may ſay, *who can be againſt us?* that is, to have their wills, to overthrow the cauſe of *Chriſt*, and the courage of Gods children; they may prevayle in this, or that particular, but at the laſt, all their plots, and counſels, ſhall proove abortive, and bring forth a lie. All is but to magnifie Gods power the more, in letting them goe ſo farre: and then to daſh all their molds, and plots. Gods children, they have the Devill and all his company, the world, and the fleſh: but there is God the Father, Sonne, and Holy-Ghoſt, for them, the bleſſed Trinity, that are able to blow away the other three, and all the ſtrength, and ſupport they have whatſoever.

Who ſhall be againſt us?

It is not a queſtion of doubting, or inquiſition to learne any thing; but it is a queſtion of triumph: he doth (as it were) caſt a bancke, and bid defiance to all enemies whatſoever: *Who ſhall be againſt us?* Let them ſtand out, Satan, and the world, and all Satans ſupports, let them doe their worſt. There is a ſtrange confidence which is ſeated in the hearts of Gods children that they dare, thus dare hell, and earth, and all infernall powers, they ſet God ſo high in their hearts, that they dare

ſay

ſay with a ſpirit of confidence, *who ſhall be againſt us?* The meaning is, not, who ſhall be againſt us, to take away our lives or liberties, &c. As the ſpeech is, they may kill us, but they cannot hurt us: the worſt they can doe is to ſend us to heaven, and make us partakers of that we deſire moſt. Firſt wee deſire that God will be with us here; and ſecondly, that we may be with God in heaven: they make Gods children partakers of their deſires, by killing of them. Let Tyrants, and all perſons, that have a malignant diſpoſition to the Church of God, and are armed with power, let them doe their worſt, the cauſe muſt ſtand impregnable; *Chriſt* will have a Church, and Kingdome in the world, and their ſpirits will be impregnable againſt them: they may kill them, but they cannot hurt them; they may kill them, but they cannot kill their courage. As we ſee in the Martyres, there was the Spirit of God in them, above all the dealings of of the perſecutors: there was a fire of Gods Spirit in them, above all outward fire whatſoever. You ſee it muſt be taken for granted, that the Church of God, and every particular Chriſtian, hath many enemies againſt them, as it is, *Pſal.* 129. *From my youth up* (ſaith the Church) *they have fought againſt me, but they have not prevayled.* From my youth up, from *Abel*, to the laſt Saint that ſhall be in the world, there will be alway ſome againſt Gods people: yet their comfort is that none ſhall Pſal. 129.

ſhall be againſt them to prevaile, either over the Spirit of God in them, or over the cauſe that they manage.

Vſe.

The ſtate of a Chriſtian impregnable.

First of all you ſee then, that the ſtate of a Chriſtian in this world is an impregnable ſtate, and a glorious condition. Here is glory upon glory, from this clauſe to the end of the Chapter. *If God be with us, who ſhall be againſt us? If God gave his Sonne for us, ſhall hee not with him give us al things elſe?* there is another glorious ſpeech. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods people?* another glorious triumphant ſpeech, another glorious ſpeech, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God founded in Chriſt?* Hee loves *Chriſt* firſt, and us in *Chriſt* as members, and as he loves him eternally, ſo he loves us eternally too. Therefore you ſee every way the ſtate of a Chriſtian is a glorious condition, *who can be againſt us?* You ſee the ſtate of Gods people, it is an impregnable and glorious condition. Then, by this meanes, thoſe that are ſtrange Paradoxes to fleſh and blood, yet they agree in a Chriſtian.

A Chriſtian never alone.

He is never alone; when hee is alone, God is with him, the Father, Son, and Holy-Ghoſt, are with him, Angels are with him, God is not only with him, but his guard is with him, and Gods Spirit is with him, and in him victoriouſly both in grace, and comfort. *Chriſt* ſaith to his Diſciples, when they thought to leave him alone: ſaith hee, you cannot leave me alone, *My Father is with me:* and Saint *Paul* towards

wards his latter end, that had deſerved ſo well of the Chriſtian world, *All forſooke me* (ſaith he) *but the Lord forſooke me not, but delivered me out of the mouth of the Lion.* So a Chriſtian is not alone, hee is not left to the mercy of his enemies; but God is with him, and who ſhall be againſt him to prevayle over him?

A Chriſtian, though weake in himſelfe, ſtrong in God.

Againe though a Chriſtian be a worme, a perſon trampled upon: for ſo the Church is the moſt afflicted part of man-kind: yet *Feare not thou worme* Jacob. The world accounts them as wormes, and they account themſelves ſo, they are trodden on as wormes; they are wormes upon earth, yet they have a glorious head in heaven, and a glorious guard about them, ſtrange things agree in a Chriſtian: therefore let us not ſtumble, though wee ſee not theſe things preſently, the life of a Chriſtian is a myſterie.

Chriſtianity grounded ſtrongly.

Againe, hence we ſee that a Chriſtian profeſſion, to be a ſound Chriſtian, to have true faith in *Chriſt*, to be one with *Chriſt*, and to be taken out of the ſtate of nature, this condition and the happineſſe of it, it hath the ſtrongeſt foundation of any life in the world. Chriſtianity is founded upon the ſtrongeſt and the greateſt reaſons that can bee: Faith ſtands with the greateſt reaſon, that a thing can doe. Why? The comfort of a Chriſtian is that he hath no enemy that ſhall prevaile over him, and what is the ground of that? God is with him, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt:

Faith is that that layes hold upon that presence and promise, and covenant of God, and is not faith well bottomed? A Christian that carries himselfe valiantly andcouragiously, is not his course grounded on sound reason? Is not God with him? God the Father, is his father; God the Son is his Redeemer; God the Holy Ghost, is his Comforter. There is no other men that have strong reason for their course, for that choise that they make of their Religion and of their wayes, they prove but fooles in the conclusion: onely the sound Christian that by the Spirit of God hath his eyes open to see the cursed estate he is in by nature, and what it is to be in Christ, andby a Spirit of faith is made one with Christ, hee is the truely wise man in his faith and affiance, that the world mockes at, that hee hath no common supports in the world, which hee cares not for, if God be on his side, hee cares not what man can doe against him, as it is *Psal.* 118. you see on what ground it is founded: God is with him, and none can be against him.

Psal. 118.

To lay up principles.

Let us labour to lay up these principles, wee worke according as our principles are: Principles are the foundation of all conclusions that arise from them. As our grounds are, so are we in our faith, and working, and grace, and comfort, every way: if wee have rotten principles, if the grounds of our comfort bee rotten, our course will be rotten, and uncomfortable

fortable in the concluſion. Let us build upon the Rocke, to be well bottomed, and founded, that our principles and grounds bee ſtrong, and that they be ſo to us; for what if God be with his, if he be not ſo to us? Let us labour to lay up ſound grounds. Grounds have influence into the whole courſe of our lives; this one Text hath influence into all the parts of our lives, in doing, in ſuffering, in all conditions. I know not a more pregnant fruitfull principle in the Scripture than this, *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* It is like a pearle, little in quantity, few in words; but ſtrong in ſence, large in the fruit that iſſues from it. Therefore as wee may carry pearles or precious things whereſoever we go, becauſe there is a great deale of worth in them, and they be ſmall in quantity: ſo wee may carry this principle with us, let us bee ſure to lay it up, and make uſe of it. There be theſe two, *That there is a God*, and *that God is with his children*, and ſo with his children, that hee will ſubvert and overthrow all their enemies, and all their plots and endevours; a principle of wonderfull comfort.

If this principle be well layd, it is a ground of a Chriſtians courage, in all conditions whatſoever: it is no matter how many enemies he hath; for as *Cyprian* ſaith, *Non poteſt ſeculum, &c.* the world cannot hurt him, that in the world hath God for his protectour: for the Divell hee is cruſhed already, though hee

Ground of Chriſtian courage.

Cyprian.

In oppoſition.

keepe adoe, and ſtirre up ſtormes, he periſheth in the waves (as he ſaith) hee hurts himſelfe more than any body elſe, hee increaſeth his owne torment, and ſo doe all his children: The fleſh likewiſe it buſles againſt the Spirit, but it looſeth, and the ſpirit gaines upon every foyle: why? here is the principle, God is with us, there is no power can reſiſt God: for then God ſhould withſtand himſelfe: the power that the creature hath, it is but a borrowed power; and if by a borrowed power it ſhould withſtand Gods purpoſe, God muſt be againſt himſelfe, his Kingdome muſt bee divided, which is a contradiction. Therefore this is the ground of the courage of a Chriſtian in all conditions. What is the reaſon that the Scripture hath that phraſe ſo often, *Feare not, I am with thee*; as to *Paul*, and *Ioſhua*, and the reſt? becauſe it is the ground of all courage. We ſee weaker creatures than man, a Dogge in the ſight of his maſter, hee will fight couragiouſly, becauſe he hath a ſuperiour nature by him, that he thinkes will backe him: And ſhall not a Chriſtian when he hath layd up this principle, that God is with him, God incarnate, God in his nature, when he is a member of God (as it were) of that perſon that is God, ſhall he not be couragious when he hath him to looke upon him, and to backe him?

And if God be with us, hee is not ſo with us as to neglect us, he is ſo with us, as he hath intereſt

intereſt in the cauſe we have, and in our perſons, hee is with us as one with us, nay as in us by his Spirit, and whoſoever toucheth us toucheth the apple of his eye. *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* Here is ground of courage in whatſoever may befall us, to ſtand it out in all conditions whatſoever. Nothing can ſever *Chriſt* and a Chriſtian: this bodie will never be beheaded: *Chriſt* will never bee ſeparated from his body, hee will not looſe the pooreſt member he hath. You ſee it is the duty of a Chriſtian to be couragious, and undaunted in the cauſe of God, and from this ground, becauſe God is with him, and who can be againſt him? Let all the world bee againſt God, and againſt the cauſe that a Chriſtian profeſſeth, they doe but kicke againſt the prickes, they daſh againſt a rocke, as the waves that breake themſelves, they doe not hurt the rock a whit, they doe but caſt ſtones upward that fall upon their heads againe. Therefore it is a deſperate cauſe that malicious ſpirits manage, who have more parts then grace, and arme themſelves and their wits to hurt the people and Church of God, and ſlander his cauſe, and doe all the hurt they can.

In our callings.

It is a ground likewiſe of encouragement in our callings; when God calls us to any thing in our places, that is good, hee will be with us: therefore in our places and ſtanding, let us doe that that belongs to us; let us not

feare that we ſhall want that which is neceſſary, or miſcarry any way. When *Moſes* pretended he could not ſpeake, *Who gives a mouth*, ſaith God to him? Therefore let us take courage, not onely in ſuffering, and oppoſition, but in our places and ſtandings. God will bee with us, hee gives his Angels charge, to keepe us in our wayes, wee have a guard over us.

Ground of contentment.

Here is a ground likewiſe of all contentment in any condition in the world; what can be ſufficient to him, that God cannot ſuffice? God All-ſufficient is with thee, thou canſt want nothing that is for thy good; thou maiſt want this and that, but it is for thy good that thou wanteſt it, *Thoſe that feare God, ſhall want nothing that is good:* It is a ground of all contentment, God is with them, to fill their ſouls to the utmoſt. He is made for the ſoule, and the ſoule for him: for our end is to have communion with God in *Ieſus Chriſt* here, and everlaſtingly in Heaven; God is fitted for us, and we for him. Here is freſh comfort for the ſoule alway, hee can fill up every corner of the ſoule, he is larger than our ſoules. Therefore let us be content, in what condition ſoever we are in, God is with us; therefore, *let the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding guard our hearts:* even from this very ground and concluſion, *God is with us, who can be againſt us?* Let *Moſes* be caſt into a basket of Bul-ruſhes, if God be with him, hee ſhall not be drowned;

Let

Let *Daniel* bee caſt into the Den, if God bee with him, God will come between the Lyons teeth and him: Let the three bleſſed men be caſt into the fiery Furnace, a fourth ſhall bee with them, and keepe them from the hurt of the flame; Let God be with *Noah*, hee ſhall ſwim upon the waters, and the greater the waters the more ſafe hee, and the neerer to heaven: Let God be with us, and we may be content with any condition whatſoever.

Not to be diſcouraged for our infirmities.

Againe, let us not be over much diſcouraged with our infirmities and corruptions; *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* Our corruptions are againſt us, and they are worſe to me than the Devill, and all enemies, ſaith a poore Chriſtian. Indeed they are, for the devill hath no advantage againſt us, but by our corruptions: but if thou account thy corruptions thine enemies, they are Gods enemies, and *Chriſts* enemies, as well as thine, hee will be with thee, and thy corruptions ſhall more and more be waſted; for the fleſh ſhall fall before the ſpirit, this *Dagon* ſhall fall before this bleſſed Arke; ſtronger is hee that is in us, than he that is in the world. The Spirit of God is ſtronger in us, than corruption in us, or the world without us; it miniſters ſtronger grounds of comfort than all other can doe of diſcomfort. If you bee under the ſpirit and under grace, *ſinne ſhall not have dominion over you*: It may be in you, but it ſhall not have dominion, becauſe yee are under the

covenant of grace. Therefore though corruption be in us, for our exerciſe and humiliation, yet it ſhall not be againſt us, to abridge us of comfort; they ſerve to drive us neerer to God. Let none be diſcouraged, *Chriſt came to deſtroy the workes of the Devill*; therefore hee came to deſtroy ſinne in us, which is the work of the Devill, hee came to take away, not only the guilt, but the very being of ſinne, as he will at laſt: for if God and *Chriſt* be with us, who ſhall be againſt us?

Obiect. But it may be objected by ſome: But I finde not God with me.

Anſwer. It is true, ſometimes God hides himſelfe, *Thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelfe*; hee ſeemes as a ſtranger in his owne Church, to be as a way-faring man, as the Prophet ſaith, he takes no notice of his Church and their afflictions, hee ſeemes not to take them to heart, nor to pitty his Church. Oh! but this is but for a time, and for tryall, *Can a mother forget her childe?* Iſai. 49. Put caſe ſhe ſhould, yet will not I forget thee. God hides himſelfe but a while, to try the graces of his children, and to give way to the enemies, to let his children to ſee their corruptions, & his wiſe diſpenſation. And theſe deſertions wee muſt be acquainted with. God ſeemes to be away from his children, yet he is with them, and ſupports them with inviſible ſtrength. Hee ſeemes to bee with wicked men in proſpering them in the world, that they have al at their wil in outward things,

God ſometimes hides himſelfe.

Iſay 49.

things, yet he is farre from them; hee withdrawes himselfe in spirituall things, they have no grace, no sound inward comfort. And he seemes opposite to his children, hee leaves them outwardly, in regard of assistance, and friends: but they have an invisible inward presence of the spirit, to support and strengthen them; therefore measure not desertions, Gods being, or not being with us by outward respects; for so he is with the enemies of the Church oft-times, and not with his children: But hee is with his in the sweetest manner, supporting of them when they are in darkenesse, and see no light of Gods countenance; yet they have so much light, though they thinke they see it not, as makes them trust in God, *Let him that is in darknesse and sees no light, trust in the name of God.* Therefore, as I said, it is a principle pregnant for comfort, and use: if God be with us, he is with us in life and death; for whom he loves, he loves everlastingly, from everlasting to everlasting.

Question.

If this be so, what shall wee doe to God againe? what is the best evidence to know that God is with us?

Answer.

Wee may know that God is with us,

When wee are with him.

There is a relation betweene God and his, he is so with them, as that they are with him likewise in all passages. Doth he chuse them? they in time chuse him, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in earth that I desire in comparison of thee.* Doth hee call them? they answer. Doth hee justifie and free them from their

their sinnes, they make that answer of faith that *Peter* speakes of, *I doe beleeve, Lord help my unbeliefe*; they have faith to lay hold upon the forgivenesse. And likewise, if God be with them, they can delight in Gods presence; Can God delight to bee present with them that have not grace to delight in him? Gods children maintaine their communion with him in all the sanctified meanes they can, they are afraid to breake with God. Therefore those that to please and give content to others, and for base ends will displease their God, it is a heavie signe that God as yet hath not shewed himselfe in his gracious mercy in *Christ Iesus* to them.

2 *Delight in Gods presence.*

If God be with us, wee will be of his side, and his enemies shall be our enemies, and his friends our friends. Hee that claimes this, that God is with him, he will say, I will bee with God, and for God. God hath two things in the world that wee must have a care of, his Church, and his cause; take them out of the world, the world is but a hell upon earth, a company of miscreants, prophane, godlesse, impudent, poysonfull creatures; take away the cause of God, Religion, and the people that are begotten by Religion, and what is the rest of mankind? The world would not stand (but be all upon heapes) for a company of sinfull wretches that will have their wills: but it is for the Church, and people of God, that the world stands. Now hee that hath

3 *Taking Gods side.*

God

God with him, and he is in termes with God, that they are friends (as *Abraham* was the friend of God) he will side with God and Religion, Gods cause shall bee his cause, and Gods people his people, hee will cleave to Gods side as the safest; if hee may have never so much preferment in the world, hee will not joyne with Antichrist; hee will not betray the cause of Religion, if hee might have a world for it: Why? because he knows if *God* be with him, who can be against him? *God* hath given us understanding, and grace, to maintaine friendship with him, to have common friends, and common enemies: Therefore if we stand not for *God*, let us never talke of *Gods* presence with us. Hee will bee present to confound us, to overthrow us, and pursue us to Hell, but not graciously present, without wee labour to maintaine the cause of Religion as farre as wee may. *God is with us, if wee be with him*, 2 *Chron.* 15. if wee be with *God* to take his part, hee will be with us to protect and defend us, to guide and comfort us, and to give issue to all our affaires: Not that our being with him, is the prime cause of his being with us; but it is an evidence to know whether hee be with us (as wee make profession) when as farre as our callings will suffer, wee be with him, and maintaine his cause. 2 Chron. 15.

Againe, If wee would know whether we be with God, and hee with us, aske conscience whether it bee with thee, for conscience is Gods

4
By testimony of conscience.

Gods Vicar. Is conſcience with thee, doſt thou not ſinne againſt conſcience? What conſcience ſaith, God ſaith; and what it forbids, God forbids, eſpecially when it is enlightned by the word; doth conſcience ſpeak peace to thee from the Word? then thou art with God, and God is with thee. Eſpecially in the great point of juſtification, doth conſcience ſpeak peace to thee in the blood of *Chriſt*? is thy heart ſprinkled with it; that it is not as the blood of *Abel* that cries for vengeance? haſt thou a ſpirit of faith, to beleeve that *Chriſt* ſhed his blood for thee in particular? then thou art with God, and he with thee, becauſe God hath ſprinkled the blood of *Chriſt* upon thy heart.

Queſt. *Anſwer.* *How to have God with us.* 1 *By renewing our Covenants.*

What courſe ſhall wee take to keepe *God* comfortably with us? Looke thou be in covenant with him, and not onely at large in covenant: but looke that continually upon all occaſions thou renew thy covenant: for ſometimes *Gods* children may be in covenant, they may be his children; yet becauſe they renew not their covenant, eſpecially after ſome breaches, *God* is not with them, ſo comfortably as hee would, to free them from their enemies; as wee ſee in the caſe of the *Benjamites*, *Gods* people ſometimes may have the worſt, though they be in covenant becauſe they have committed ſome ſin, and have not renewed their peace and covenant with *God*. Therefore if we would make a comfortable uſe of this truth,

that

that *God* is with us, and would finde him ſo in our affaires and buſineſſe, let us renew our covenant upon all occaſions, and our purpoſe to pleaſe God.

2 *Looke to our cauſe.*

And then looke to the cauſe wee take in hand, and to our carriage in that cauſe, if our perſons be good, be in covenant, and the cauſe good, and our conſcience good, and our carriage ſutable, then God will be with us. Let us make uſe of theſe principles, that we may bee in love with the comfortable ſecure condition of a Chriſtian; there is no ſtate ſo glorious, ſo comfortable, ſo ſecure, and free from danger. If we were in heaven and ſhould look downe below upon all ſnares, and dangers, what would we care for them? Now if he be with us, and we with him, *God is our habitation, we dwell in the ſecret of the Almighty, hee is our high Tower, The way of wiſdome is on high, to eſcape the ſnares below.* Therefore let us raiſe our ſoules as high as heaven, and God is, and ſet our ſelves where our hopes are, where our *God* is, and wee have ſet our ſelves in our Tower, that we have ſet God in our hearts, and ſet our ſelves in him; then we may overlooke the devill, and men, and death, and danger and all. As a man that ſtands upon the top of a Rock, that is higher than all the waves, hee overlookes them, and ſees them break themſelves upon the Rocke: ſo when wee ſee God with us, and our ſelves with him, by a Spirit of comfort, wee can overlooke all with a holy defiance, Pſal. 91.

defiance, as the Apoſtle ſaith here, *who can be againſt us?* what can ſeparate us? Oh! the excellent ſtate of a Chriſtian, when he is aſſured of his condition! Who would not labour for aſſurance that yields this abundant comfort in all conditions?

Novemb. 5. A word of the occaſion, for which I made choyſe of this portion of Scripture: Here is a double fitneſſe to the occaſion, both at home and abroad, *If God be with us, who can bee againſt us?*

God was at home in 88. hee was with us in the Powder-Treaſon: Hee was with us in the great ſickneſſe to preſerve us, and to give us our lives for a prey, hee hath beene with us. And wee ought not to forget this, but upon occaſion of this great deliverance, to call all former deliverances to minde, nationall, and perſonall, to conſider how often God hath given us our lives, and how oft he hath preſerved us from death, and to take occaſion to bleſſe *God* for all at once, and ſo to make ſome ſpeciall uſe of theſe meetings.

Then if we looke abroad, God hath beene with us in that he hath been with his Church; for they, and wee, make but one body, that member that hath not a ſympathy with the body, it is but a dead member: therefore if we be not affected with the preſence of God, with the Armies abroad, wee are dead members. Wee may ſay, in regard of theſe outward deliverances, *God hath beene with us, and*

none

none hath beene against us. If God had not been with us in the Powder-plot, where had wee beene? Our lives would have beene made a prey, that that would have beene done, would have beene more then the blowing up of the Parliament; they would have blowne up the Kingdome with the King, and Religion with religious persons, and the State with Statesmen: It would have brought a confusion of all, and have molded all after an Idolatrous Antichristian fashion, it would have overthrowne the State, and persons and all; the issues would have been worse than the present thing: And therefore if God had not beene with us, as hee was graciously with us, what would have become of us? as it is in *Psal.* 129. If God had not beene with us, they had made us a prey, and overwhelmed, and devoured us all, there had been no hope. Psal. 119.

Have not wee cause to blesse God, and to be thankefull? therefore let us labour to doe it for our selves, and for our neighbours. How shall we shew our thankfulnesse to God? not in outward manifestations onely, which is laudable, and a good demonstration of the affections of people: but alas what is that? wee must shew our thankfulnesse in loving that Religion that *God* hath so witnessed for, and defended so miraculously: Labour to love the truth, to entertaine it in the love of it, and to bring our hearts to a more perfect hatred of Popery: For if wee waxe cold and indif-

indifferent, or oppoſe Gods cauſe, and undermine it, doe wee think that God would ſuffer this long, would hee not ſpue us out of his mouth? (with reverence I ſpeake it.) Though hee have defended us againe and againe, hee will be gone with his truth and religion: It came not alone, nor it will not goe alone; if Religion goe, our peace, and proſperity, and the flouriſhing of our ſtate, all will goe. It is our Arke, if that goe away, our happineſſe goes away, let us make much of Religion, that is the way to be thankfull.

Againe, let us ſhew our thankfulneſſe by giving and doing ſome good to the poore, by refreſhing their bowels, that they may have occaſion to bleſſe God.

And for the time to come, let us truſt in God, that God will bee with us, if wee bee with him; and to ſticke to him: who then ſhall bee againſt us? Let the Devill, and *Rome*, and Hell, bee all againſt us, if God bee with us. *Bellarmine* goes about to prove *Luther* a falſe Prophet. *Luther* as hee was a couragious man, and had a great and mighty ſpirit of Faith, and prayer: ſo his expreſſions were ſutable to his ſpirit: what ſaith he? The cauſe that I defend, is *Chriſts*, and Gods cauſe, and all the world ſhall not ſtand againſt it, it ſhall prevaile; if there be a counſell in earth, there is a counſell in heaven that will diſappoint all. God laughes in Heaven at his enemies, and ſhall wee weepe?

And

And things are in a good way, if wee can goe on, and helpe the cauſe of God with our prayers, and faith that God will goe on; and with our cheerefulneſſe and joy, that God may delight to goe on with his owne cauſe. We may encourage our ſelves; though perhaps wee ſhall not ſee the iſſue of theſe things, yet poſterity ſhall ſee it.

(***)

FINIS.

THE CHVRCHES ECCHO.

In one Sermon.

By

The late learned and reverend Divine,

RICH. SIBBS:

Doctor in Divinitie, M^r of *Katherine Hall* in *Cambridge*, and ſometimes Preacher at GRAYES-INNE.

ISAY 64. 1.

Oh that thou wouldſt rent the Heavens and come downe, that the Mountaines might flow downe at thy preſence.

LONDON,
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1638.

THE CHURCH ECHO.

THE CHVRCHES ECCHO.

REVEL. 22. 17.
And the Spirit, and the Bride, say, Come.

THis Booke of the *Revelation* is an hiſtory of the ſtate of the Church from the firſt comming of Chriſt to his ſecond comming.

Theſe two laſt Chapters ſet downe the glorious condition of the Church in the latter end of the world, and as it ſhall be in the conſummation of all things: when the preſent ſtate of things ſhall determine in the ſecond comming of *Chriſt*. For howſoever (no doubt but) there is ſet downe the glorious condition of the Church in this world in part; yet the deſire of the Church reſts not in any condition here, therefore it is carried to the conſummation and perfection of all. There ſhall be a kind of new world at the converſion of the *Iewes*: but when the Church is under that bleſſed condition, yet it is under deſires ſtill of farther perfection, till an end be made of all things. Therefore this ſaying here, *Come*, hath reference to the future ſtate of the Church. All the deſires of the Church are reſtles till the conſummation

of all things in the latter comming of *Christ*. It carries all before it in a desire, *Come* Lord therefore to call the *Iewes*: *Come* Lord to confound Antichrist, which must be before that: for the *Iewes* wil never come in, till the scandal of Idolatry be removed: & when all this is fulfilled, then come Lord to make an end of this sinful world.

Simile. As it is with a river, it carryes all before it, till it discharge it selfe into the Ocean, where it is swallowed up: so it is with the desires of a Christian; they carry all in the meane time, between heaven and them in a streame, and never rest till they be swallowed in heaven it selfe, and the second comming of *Christ* to finish all things, and then is the period of all happinesse, and the accomplishment of all promises; when *Christ* shall come *to be glorious in his Saints*.

The words they are (as it were) an eccho an answere backe againe of the Bride, the Spouse of *Christ*, unto his promise of his comming, which he makes twise in this Chapter, in ver. 7. *Behold I come quickly*, and in ver. 12. *Behold, I come quickly*; and he comes not empty handed; *My reward is with me*. Now the Church here eechoes backe againe, *Christ* saith, *I come*, and the Spirit, and *the Bride say, come*. The words containe the most heavenly desire that can be, of the most excellent personage in this world, the Queene, the Bride of *Christ*; and it is a desire to the most excellent person absolutely, *Christ* himselfe, a desire of his comming; and it is stirred up by the most excellent Spirit, the holy Spirit of God:

for

for the meaning of the words is this, *The Spirit and the Bride say, Come*, not as distinct and severed, but the Bride by the Spirit saith, *Come*, the Holy Ghost in the Bride, as it is *Rom.* 8. 26. *We know not what to pray, but the Spirit makes intercession*; How is that? The Spirit makes intercession, by making us make intercession: for what *Christ* doth, the Spirit causeth us to do, for there is one Spirit in *Christ*, and us. So the Bride by the motion of the holy, and blessed Spirit, say, *Come*. The order of our discourse upon these words shall be this,

Rom. 8. 26.

First, to speake of the person wishing, and her condition, *The Bride*.

And then of the desire of this excellent personage, the *Bride*.

And then of the mooving cause that stirres up the *Bride* to desire the comming of *Christ*,

First, for the person, the *Bride*.

The Church a Bride.

The Church is sometime compared to a woman for weakenesse; sometimes to a wife, for faithfulnesse to her Husband *Christ*; sometimes to a Bride, because she is contracted to *Christ* in this world; sometimes to a mother for her fruitfulnesse; sometimes to a Virgin, for her chastity: here to a Bride, because this life is but the time of Contract; but the consummation of the marriage shall be in heaven. Now this contract between the Church and *Christ*, and betweene every particular soule and *Christ*: for both are the bride of *Christ*. Even as it is the same soule that is in the little finger, and in all the whole

body, the same soule enlivens both: so it is the same Spirit in the Bride in generall, and in every particular Christian, therfore the Bride is both every particular Christian, & the whole Church. Now the contract that is made betweene the soule, and between the Church & *Christ*, it is by the Spirit of God which knits the soule to *Christ*, and *Christ* to the soule. And for this end that *Christ* might be a Husband, and contract this Bride to himselfe in our nature, he married our nature, that he might marry our persons.

There is a three-fold degree of union.

An union of { Nature. Grace. Glory.

The union of nature was, when *Christ* tooke our nature upon him. The union of grace, is when we take his nature, when wee partake of the divine nature: The union of glory is when we shall all be in heaven. The first is, for the second, and the second for the third. *Christ* became *bone of our bone*, in nature, that we might be *bone of his bone*, with him in grace, and so perfectly one with him in glory. We see the Bride that is the Person. Here I might take occasion to speak of the sweet comfort that issues from this, that the second Person in the Trinity should dignifie us so much, as to take us to unity, with, and contract us to himselfe; but I will not speak much of this point, having spoken more at large of it out of the Canticles.

Can. 5.

If marriage be honorable, what is this marriage

and

and contract? which is indeed the patterne of all other, others are but shadowes to this. Hence comes the sweet security & peace of the Church, from this contract between *Christ* and it; for all our debts are discharged by this, he tooke upon him our sins. And then the Church hath interest in him, and all his in this contract and marriage, which is to be consummate, all that he is & hath, is the Churches. *All is yours, because you are Christs.* What a large comfort is this? if we had hearts to consider of it, and to improove it; his grace serves for the Church, *of his fulnesse wee receive grace for grace.* So wee may say of all the priviledges that *Christ* hath; they are first in him, and then in the Church, the Church shines in his beames. And as it is matter of wondrous comfort, so it is likewise matter of more speciall comfort, in case of infirmities. The Church is a woman, therefore the weaker vessell. Now God that bids us *beare with the woman, as the weaker vessell,* to honour her with the honour of gentle usage: (for that honor is meant) he that teacheth man his duty, will he not performe it himselfe? to beare with his Church, as the weaker vessell. Especially when it is the condition of the marriage, *Hosea 2. I will marry thee to me in mercy*; wee may clayme mercy as a part of our dowry by *Christ*, pardoning mercy, forbearing, pitying mercy; we make not use of this comfort, when we are discouraged.

Use 1. Comfort by our marriage to Christ.

Hosea 2.

But this teacheth us likewise how to carry our selves to *Christ* as we should doe, chastly, to take

Use 2.

take heed how we judge of things, we must keep our judgements chast. A Christian hath not liberty to ryot in his opinion, to run at randome, to see what carnall reason saith: No, he must think what *Christ* thinks, and submit his judgement to him. And he must have no will of his owne, he must give it up to his contracted Husband, *Christ*, and be content to be ruled by him in all things; he must forget his fathers house, and his former condition, and not to make this marriage, (as carnall professors doe) a cover for their adulterous unfaithfulnesse. What is the course of many Christians? They make the profession of Religion, a cover for their ill dealing, for their unfaithfull courses, what a shame is this? It is abhominable. What makes the faults of wives worse, then the fault of single persons, because they are contrary to covenants, besides many other inconveniences, the confusion of ofspring, and the like: but this is one grand difference, to make the exageration of the fault, it is contrary to former covenant. Those that are swearers, and filthy persons, that disgrace Religion, and yet notwithstanding cover themselves under pretence, that they are contracted to *Christ*, they are baptised, and come to the Sacrament, &c. such wretched persons shall know ere long, what it is to dally with Religion, what is the aggravation of the faults of such persons? They deale as filthy adultresses doe, they make Religion a cover for their wrecked courses. God is mercifull, *Christ* dyed, we are

Christian

Christians, we are baptised, &c. This is an obligation to a stricter life, it gives men no liberties, but is a stricter bond to holy life, the renewing of the new covenant againe, and againe. Therefore there is no comfort for any such wretched persons, that countenance themselves under the profession of Religion: it adds a greater degree to their offence, *Oh ye adulterers, and adulteresses*, saith S. *Iames*, *know ye not that the love of the world is enmity with God?* When we let our hearts loose to vaine things, and yet professe that we are contracted to *Christ*, we are adulterers, & adulteresses.

I beseech you therefore in the name of *Christ*, for it is our office that are Ministers, to bring *Christ* and his Spouse together, we are *Paranymphi*, friends of the Bridegroom, and it is in the new Testament. Let me intreat you in godly earnest, those that have not seriously given up their names to *Christ*, to become obedient to him, to joyne with him in good earnest, and to resigne all to him in your inward man, in your judgements and wills and affections, and then you shall finde the most comfortable condition in this world. Indeed all is nothing, to the comfort of this condition, to be indeed, and not in outward profession onely in covenant with *Christ*, to be contracted to him. If not, if you will take liberty under the profession of Religion, to live loosely, to be swearers, & filthy persons; to use your tongues as you list, as if you had made no promise to *Christ*, as indeed we all have, what will be the confusion of your soules ere long?

oh

oh, that we dallyed with Religion, that we were intreated to be as wee ſhould be by all ſweet bonds, and yet we preferred our owne luſts, and baſe affections. This will be the aggravation of hell and damnation it ſelfe; this intreaty of *Chriſt*, and the excellent prerogatives and priviledges, that we have in *Chriſt*; and in the meane time we ſtand more upon our own baſe courſes, and will not leave any thing, to give up our ſelves to *Chriſt*: but I meane not to dwell on this point. This is the perſon: *The Bride*, ſhe is called the *Bride*, and not the wife, becauſe ſhe is onely contracted here on earth; and ſhe is called the *Bride*, in oppoſition to the whore of *Babylon* in this Book, that is, the filthy adultereſſe, the falſe Church. The true Church of *Chriſt* is a Bride, and a virgin, in heaven ſhee ſhall be a wife: the falſe Church is a whore; ſhe defiles her ſelfe with Idolatry and abhominations: ſo partly for diſtinction from it ſelfe, in heaven where it ſhall be a wife, and partly in oppoſition to the falſe Church, ſhe is here called a Bride.

The Church why called a Bride.

To come in the next place, to the deſire of the Church. How ſhould the Church know ſhe is a Bride? This is one way: The deſire of the marriage; where there is a true contract, there is a deſire of the marriage, of the conſummation of it, a deſire of the comming of *Chriſt*. In this there are two things conſiderable.

The deſire of Chriſts comming.

Firſt, that *Chriſt* will come.

And then the Church hath a deſire of this comming. That *Chriſt* will come. I need ſpend

no

no time to proove it, for it is an Article of faith, *He shall come to judge the quicke and the dead.* And he will come to make an end of what he hath begun here. He came to redeeme our soules, hee must, and he will come to redeeme our bodies from corruption. Hee came to be judged, and to die for us, he must come to be judge of the quick, and dead; he came to contract us, he will come againe to marry us, and to take us where he is. He loved us so, that he came from heaven to earth where we are, to take our nature, that he might be a fit Husband, but hee will come to take us to himselfe, we shall enter *into his Chamber, to the Palace of the great King*, Psal. 45. Hee will come; there is no question of that.

There must be a second comming of Christ.

Psal. 45.

The uneven carriage of things in this world to the eyes of men evinceth so much. You see how it is here with mighty persons that shake off *Christs* yoke; how they beare sway; how Satan playes reaks in opposing *Christ*, he rules in the children of pride: this must not alway be so, there must, and will be a time when *Christ* will *be glorious in his Saints.* Now the life of *Christ* in the Saints, is a hidden life, there must be a day of *revelation.* And even as it was in *Christs* first comming, there was all kind of arguments and witnesses to prove that he should come in the flesh, a Quire of Angels from Heaven to witnesse it; and on earth, the wise men among the Gentiles; and among the Jewes, old *Simeon*, there was men and women, all kind of witnesses. So in his second comming, there is all kind of witnesses:

neſſes: in this Chapter here is *Chriſt* and the Angell, and *Iohn*, and the Spirit, and the *Spouſe*, the Church in generall, and every particular ſoule, their deſire of his comming ſhewes that hee will come; for the deſires ſtirred up in the heart by the holy Ghoſt, they will not be in vain. The deſires of his comming ſhew that he will come; for ſpirituall deſires muſt have their accompliſhment; there will bee a comming of *Chriſt*, there is no queſtion of that.

And the Church here deſires it: it is the diſpoſition of the Church to bee carried in her deſires to it: wherein we will ſhew the ground of this deſire. And then the uſe that wee are to make of it.

The Church deſires the comming of Chriſt in regard,

1 *Of ſcandals.*

The grounds why the Church deſires the comming of *Chriſt*, are manifold.

Firſt of all, look but to the preſent condition of things in this world, the ſtate of things, the ſcandals that are in the Church: there will be a deſire in the Church that all ſcandals and offences may be removed, as it is in the Goſpel, *Chriſt will come, and take away all that offend.*

2 *Perſecutions.*

Look again to the ſtate of the Church here, it is but a perſecuted afflicted eſtate; nay thoſe that ſhould countenance the poore Church, how roughly is the poor Church uſed ofttimes of thoſe? Thoſe that ſhould encourage the Church, their rugged and rough uſage ſtirres up this deſire in the Church, whē thoſe that ſhould be moſt encouragement, are oft times the greateſt diſcouragement.

Then

Then again the Church hath Antichriſt to oppoſe it, and falſe Brethren in it; falſe perſons that hang in their affections to the world; and however they make a ſhew, yet their minds are carried to pompe, and to a falſe Religion, becauſe they are beſotted with a proud carnall diſpoſition, which they prefer before the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, vaine perſons in the boſome of the Church that know not what the glory of the Church is.

3 *Oppoſitions in the Church.*

Then againe, if we regard even the weakneſſe of the Church it ſelfe, it breedes a deſire of *Chriſts* comming: for alas, there is but a weake ſight in men; and variety of ſight where there is weakneſſe, breeds variety of judgement; and where there is variety of judgement, there will be jealouſies even among good perſons, and theſe are irkſome to the Spirit of God in any that love the ſweet peace, and concord of Chriſtians, that are contracted to *Chriſt:* this will not be avoided in this world; only thoſe that are wiſe & ſtrõgeſt in grace, they wil be the greateſt peace makers, and beare with the weake in this kind.

4 *Weakneſſe of chriſtians.*

Then againe, while we are in this world, there is not the beſt thing but Satan will put his foot and claw in, except grace over-power him. The Magiſtracie, and miniſtery alas how are they many times prophaned and abuſed by Satan and corrupt hearted men, that know not how to manage them graciouſly, and fruitfully? The Magiſtracie that is for good, it is turned oftimes for grievance, as if al the world were made

5 *Corruption by Satan.*

for

for them, and they to doe nothing but to have others Idolize them. And then for the Miniſtery, thoſe that ſhould be teachers of others many times diſcourage thoſe that they ſhould cheriſh: and as the Prophet complains in his time of the falſe Prophets, they diſcourage thoſe that they ſhould encourage, and ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, and grieve thoſe that God doth not grieve by their falſe carriage, taking contrary wayes to *Gods* Spirit; they grieve thoſe that they ſhould cheriſh, and comfort, and ſtrengthen the hearts of thoſe that they ſhould take downe, by flattery and falſe applications: This will be to the end of the world (notwithſtanding the excellent Ordinance of God, by which God workes his owne good ends) while the world ſtands there will be a taint upon *Gods* Ordinance till *Chriſt* come, and then all that grieve and offend ſhall bee taken away; there ſhall be no Sun nor Moon then, for the Lambe will doe all; there ſhall be no Magiſtracy nor Miniſtery then, *God will be all in all.*

And ſo for all conditions; there is no condition nor nothing that is good in the world, but Satan labours to bring a vanity upon it, and the corrupt heart of man is prone to yeeld to him: this will be to the end of the world. Therefore wee ſhould not bee overmuch offended, to ſee things carried otherwiſe than wee would have them. Why ſhould we wiſh for that condition that will never be in this world? Wiſh we may, but we muſt wiſh it in its owne time, it will bee here-

hereafter. Let us labour that it may be so then, and beare with all here as patiently as we can.

Againe, take the best Christians of all, in themselves, in their own particulars. Alas, what a conflicting life hath a Christian with his own heart? Sometimes in generall he can see truths very cleare, but in a particular, some passion or other, of Anger, or Revenge, &c. it clouds his judgement, that hee cannot see what is to be done, what is best. The reason is, the imperfection of the work of mortification, hinders him in his passages, and businesse, that hee cannot clearely decide of what is best at this time. S. *Paul* complaines of this, that he *could not doe the good that hee would, and that he did the ill that hee would not.* There are none but they carry some of these dregs with them in this world, that hinders them in their designes and determinations: onely those that have the power of Gods Spirit in a greater portion then the rest, they get more victory over these things, and can more clearely see any thing then others: yet notwithstanding, all have some impediment this way, even the best.

5 *Christians conflict.*

The necessities of this life inforce a great deale of trouble, the supplying the necessities of nature, and of the condition that God hath set us in, which all shall have an end then.

6 *The necessities of this life.*

Then againe, the relation between *Christ*, and this contracted Spouse, and every faithfull soule, inforceth a desire of his comming. It is the time of the Churches contract, she is a Bride

7 *The relation betweene Christ and the Church.*

now, she is contracted: now al the time between the contract, and the marriage, it is a time of longing and desire, therefore the Church cannot but desire the second comming of *Christ*. It is the nature of imperfection, where there is truth in imperfection, to desire perfection: you see the little seed that is sown in the ground, it breakes through the thicke clods, because it is not in its perfection, till it be in the eare, nature hath given it an instinct to breake out: so where the seed of grace is, it will breake, out and shoot forward to desire still, and still, till it comes to perfection. Grace being an imperfect state here, it puts forward in desiring that perfection, that it cannot attaine in this world, but in the world to come: therefore the Spirit, and the Spouse say, *Come*.

8 *From the nature of love.*

And then from the nature of the affection of love it selfe where it is planted; it is an affection of perfect union, contract will not serve, but marriage must come after. Love will not satisfie it selfe in imperfect union, but it cries, *Come*, *Come*, still it is carryed in a restlesse desire, till it come to perfection. Therefore put the case the Jewes were called and converted, and Antichrist subdued, hath the Church an accomplishment of the period of her desires, to say no more *Come*? oh no: yet *Christ* is not come as he will, there is not a perfect consummation of all, untill that of time it selfe, there will be a desire of the Bride and Spouse, to say, *come*. Thus we see what grounds there are of this desire.

But

But is this onely true of the Church militant, herebelow, doth not the Church in heaven say *Come* too? Yes the Church in heaven saith, *Come*, too. The Church in heaven, and earth are but one Family; they are (as it were) but one Parliament, there is the higher house in heaven, and the lower on earth, and both say *come*. What is the reason that the Church in heaven saith, *Come?* Because the Church in heaven have bodies that be rotting in earth; which bodyes helped them to serve God on earth, fasted with them, and prayed with them, and indured pains and toyle with them. The soule acccounts it selfe imperfect, till it be joyned to its old companion, the body againe; therefore it desires *Come Lord*, that my body may be united to me againe, that so wee may both perfectly prayse thee in heaven.

Question.

Answer. *The Church in heaven desires Christs comming.*

Then againe, they have not all their company, all the Saints are not gathered, and they will not be merry indeed, till they all meet in heaven: therfore that all may meet, even the Church in heaven, hath a desire, *Come Lord:* so both heaven and earth, agree in this, they meet in this desire.

This may be a ground of tryall, whether wee be truely the Bride of *Christ*, or no; the ground of the tryall may be gathered hence; whither is the bent of our desire carryed? is our condition so here, as that wee desire to be as we are still? then all is naught with us. The Church we see saith *come*, nothing will content her in this world: so those hearts that are wrought upon

Vse 1. *Tryall of our estate.*

by the Spirit of God, nothing here will content them but ſtill they ſay *come*. The diſpoſition in carnall perſons is cleane contrary; they ſay as it is in *Iob*, *Depart from us, wee will none of thy wayes*: they are of the mind of the Devill, in the Goſpel, *Why doeſt thou come to torment us before our time?* doe not come. If it were in the power of moſt men in the Church, whether *Chriſt* ſhould come to judge the world or no, doe you thinke they would give their voyce that way, that *Chriſt* ſhould come? they would never do it: for they know how unfit a condition they are in for the ſecond comming of *Chriſt*. If theeves and malefactors might have liberty to chuſe, whether there ſhould be Aſſizes, or no, ſurely they would never have any: ſo it is with the men of the world, that live in ſinfull wretched courſes, that abuſe their tongues, and their bodies, are they of the diſpoſition of the Bride, to ſay, *come?* oh no, they know they have not done their duty: therefore let us enter deepely into our owne ſoules, and try whether cordially we can yeeld this deſire of our hearts, to ſay *come?* Therefore to (ſpend a little time in a further ſearch) if wee can truely ſay, *Come*, we will deſire *Chriſt* to come into our ſoules now, to rule our ſoules now, to come and make way for himſelfe in our hearts. Is it poſſible for the ſoule to deſire to goe to *Chriſt*, that will not ſuffer him to come to it? If *Chriſt* rule not in us, wee ſhall never raigne with *Chriſt*: if *Chriſts* Kingdome come not to us, we ſhall never enter into *Chriſts* Kingdome:

1 *By deſiring Chriſt to come into our hearts now.*

Kingdom: therefore the ſoule that hath this deſire truly, to ſay, *Come*, it will give *Chriſt* entrance into it, and let him *come* by his Ordinances. *Come* Lord by thy word, come by thy Spirit into my heart, cloſe with my heart, drive out whatſoever is there, that will not give thee liberty to raigne as thou wilt: theſe deſires will be in a true heart, it will not cheriſh wilfully thoſe deſires that are contrary to this.

Shall we thinke that that Chriſtian that ſaith theſe words in good earneſt, will put *Chriſt* away in his Ordinances, and not care for to heare his word, nor care to meet *Chriſt* here in earth, and yet pretend a deſire to meet him in heaven? where is *Chriſt*, here? is hee not in his Congregations, and Aſſemblies of his Saints? thoſe therefore that deſpiſe the Ordinances of God, and yet pretend, that they deſire that *Chriſt* ſhould come, doe they not prophane the Lords Prayer, when they ſay, *Hallowed be thy name, Thy Kingdome come?* They patter it over, they doe not meane it in good earneſt: when they deſpiſe the Miniſtery, and the Miniſters, and whatſoever is *Chriſts*, deſpiſe the motions of his Spirit, and will not ſuffer him to rule in their hearts, but are ruled by rules of policy, and reaſon, and fleſh: can they ſay, *Come?* No, they doe abhominably prophane the Lords Prayer: what kind of Service is that, when their deſires are quite cleane contrary? It is a proteſtation contrary to their faith, and therefore it is a nullity: they profeſſe in their prayers,

that they would have *Christ* to come, and yet their course of life is contrary, they would not have him come. Againe, those that truly desire *Christ* should come, they will be subordinate helpers under *Christ*, to promote those things that tend to his comming: before *Christ* comes, Antichrist must be abolished and consumed; the Jewes must be converted, and the number of the Elect must be consummate, and finished. Therefore what shall wee say, when those that pretend to desire the comming of *Christ*, shall countenance heresies that must have an end first? And those that are against wholesome Lawes to be made in that kind, those that countenance Idolatry, and false worship, stablishing what *Christ* must abolish before he come, can they say, *Come* in good earnest? Their course is contrary to what they pray. Therefore indeed, and in good earnest we pray, *Thy Kingdome come*, and say with our soules as the Church here, *Come*, when we set our selves to abolish heresie and false worship of God, that is adulterous, and promote the true Service of God; when we labour in our places that the number of the Elect may be consummate, when wee labour, that our children may be Gods children, and our servants, may be Gods servants, and every one in our places labour that the Kingdome of *Christ* may be inlarged. If wee put not to our helping hand, to that wee pray for, it is a contradiction. Those therefore that live scandalous lives, in scandalous courses and

2 *They promote his comming.*

speeches,

ſpeeches, and hinder the converſion of peoples ſoules, and labour to draw them to wicked helliſh courſes, when they poſt to hell themſelves, and labour to draw others into curſed ſociety with themſelves, they cannot truly ſay, as the Church here, *Come*. Let us take it to heart, that we doe not mocke, and dally with Religion, it is a greater matter then we take it for. It is impoſſible, but a Chriſtian that ſaith his prayers in earneſt, ſhould be thus affected, unleſſe wee make a mockery of Religion.

Againe, if we can indeed ſay *Come*, there will be a fitting for this comming, a preparing our ſelves for it, for our going to *Chriſt*. Is it not ſo in civill things? and doth not grace worke that, that nature doth in a higher degree? If we deſire that a great perſon ſhould come to us, will there not be a fitting of our houſes, of our apparell, and entertainement ſutable to the worth of the perſon? or elſe a man may ſay, ſurely you looke for no body this day, there is nothing fitted, and prepared: ſo if we pretend we deſire *Chriſt* to *Come*, and yet notwithſtanding we are careleſſe of getting knowledge, and of purging our ſoules, of growing in grace, careleſſe of being ſuch as *Chriſt* may delight to come unto: This careleſſeneſſe of fitting, and preparing our ſelves, ſhewes that wee doe but in hypocriſie ſpeake the words, when we have no ſuch thing in our hearts. Thoſe that deſire the Kingdome of *Chriſt*, and the happy condition of Chriſtians in another world, they deſire the way of it here,

3 *Fitting for it.*

that is, by fitting, and preparing themselves for that estate, and indeed it will worke those effects, as it is *Tit.* 2. and other places, what is the motive there to live a holy, and righteous and sober life? *Looking, and waiting for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* There he inserts a holy life betweene the two commings of *Christ*, shewing that the beleeving the end of both, will worke this effect in the change of our lives, *To be sober to our selves, and just to others, and holy to God: The grace of God hath appeared*, that is, in the first comming of *Christ, teaching us to deny all ungodlinesse, and worldly lusts, &c.* and then looking forward still, for the second comming of *Christ*. So that he beleeves, that the grace of God hath appeared in saving our soules by the death of *Christ* in his first comming; and hee that beleeves that hee will come to be glorious after in his second comming; certainely he will live justly and soberly, and righteously in this present world, he will fit himselfe for that estate that hee professeth to desire. Let us trie our selves by these evidences in some measure, and not thinke our state good till wee can say from our hearts, *Come.*

But are Christians alwayes in this state of soule, that they can say, *Come?*

Answer. *Christians not alway fitted alike for Christs comming.*

I answere, they are alway in some degree fitting themselves for *Christ*; but notwithstanding, they are not alway so exact and watchfull, that they could wish, that he should come at this

this time. Take the comparison from a wife, a spouse, she heartily desires the comming home of her husband: yet perhaps sometimes things may not be in so good order, as to wish that he were here now; nay, I have not yet prepared. This is the state of careles Christians, that have soundnesse of grace, and yet are carelesse: they desire the comming of *Christ*, and they love the glory of the life to come, and indeavour weakely for it: yet they are so carelesse, some corruption hanges on them, that they have not so mortified, and subdued as they should doe; they are not yet so fitted as they should be. Therefore God often rouseth such by afflictions, and other courses in this world, to weane them more from the love of the world, and to prepare us, because we are sloathfull, and careless to prepare our selves. So I say that somtimes the best Christians sometimes may be more indisposed then at others, by reason of security growing on our soules, so weake are we, and beset with temptations: therefore let none be over-much discouraged with that; but let us strive as the Church here, to be in such an estate, as we may alway say, *Come*.

Well upon tryall if wee find our selves not so disposed as we should, how shall wee carry our selves, that we may say, *Come?*

Use.

Direction to come to desire Christs comming. 1

Let us labour to purge our selves by mortification more &more, *he that hath this hope purgeth himselfe*. And let us endure Gods purging of us, and justifie Gods purging of us by afflictions;

To purge our selves.

ons; and thinke that God hath this ayme; certainely this is to make me more heavenly minded, to rayse my affections up. I will therefore beare the anger of God, I have deserved it, and he hath holy ends in it to make me partaker of his righteousnesse. Let us purge our selves by grace, and endure the course that God takes to purge us by daily crosses; for God aymes by it to weane us more and more from the world.

2 *Vnloose our hearts from the world.*

And let us labour daily more and more, to unloose our hearts from the things below. Those that would remoove a Tree, they loosen it from the roote of it; so our affections are rooted to earthly things, therefore wee should labour to loose them daily more and more, by the consideration of the uncertainety and vanity of all things: they are not that that will sticke to us, and give us content, when wee shall stand in most need of them: here we must leave the things of the world, as wee find them here, we must part with them. Therefore wee should labour to unloose our hearts, and to plant, and set, and pitch them where they may be safe, and swallowed up in better things.

3 *Meditate of our happy condition.*

And to this end, often meditate of the excellency that shall be in the second comming of *Christ*; oh, the glorious time then! See the meanes how the Church comes to be stirred up here, to say *Come*. *Christ* saith before, that he was the *Roote of* David, *the bright morning Starre*, he sets out himselfe gloriously, and the gloriousnesse of that time: then the Church, hea-

ring

ring what the excellency of that state will be then, and the excellency of *Christ*; the Church hath desires sutable to those manifestations. Therefore let us meditate of the state of the Church, what it will be, and of the excellency, and glory of *Christ*, when hee shall come to be glorious in his Saints, what a happy condition it will be. And to feed our meditations, let us be oft in hearing, and reading, of these things. If wee hope for any thing to come in this world: as if a young heire that shall have great possessions, the more he growes towards yeeres, the more hee thinks, I shall have this mannor, and that, hee thinkes of the possessions hee hath; So a Christian, the neare hee growes to heaven, the more hee thinkes upon, and talkes, and is willing to heare of that condition that hee shall have. The more we are in meditation, and to helpe meditation, the more we are in thinking, and speaking, and conferring of these things, what will befall us ere long (if we be Gods,) the more our affections will be raised up, as we see in the Spouse here, upon the manifestation of the excellency of *Christ*, comes this desire after the comming of *Christ*. This is one reason of the deadnesse of our hearts; wee doe not awaken them with such holy thoughts as we should, and wee are not under those meanes as wee might oft times. There cannot be any thing more sweet, and powerfull to drawe up our soules, then meditation in this kind.

Againe,

4 *Labour for the Spirit.*

Againe, that we may be able to say, *come*, let us labour to be more and more ſpirituall, that the holy Spirit may rule our ſpirits, & then the ſpirit is alwayes for *Come*. Nature ſaith not come, becauſe it is above nature: I meane nature not corrupt, ſaith not *Come*. It is a hidden ſecret to nature, nature ſaith ſtay ſtill, it hath no deſire to it, the fleſh is contrary altogether: but the Spirit in the Spouſe ſaith, *Come*. The Spirit doth all, as the ſoule doth all in the body, it acts it, and leads it, and comforts it, and gives beauty to it: ſo the Spirit firſt knits *Chriſt* and us together: there is the ſame Spirit in *Chriſt* the head, and in the Church, there is one common Spirit in head, and members. And when it hath done, ſo it acts, and leads, and ſanctifies, and purifies the Church, it acquaints the Church with the good things that God hath given her, acquaints her with the deepe meaning of God, the love of God in *Chriſt*, it acquaints God with our deſires, hee knowes our meaning in our prayers, and we know his meaning, it acquaints us with the ſtate we ſhall have after, and aſſures us of it; It is the earneſt *of the Inheritance*: the Spirit, and the graces of it are not onely the earneſt, but a part of that Inheritance, a part of heaven, where our bodies ſhall be ſpirituall; not that they ſhall turne to be ſpirits, but they ſhall be ruled wholy by the Spirit, as the ſoule rules the body.

As it is in a river, it is impoſſible that the ſtreame ſhould run higher then the ſpring-head from

from whence it comes: so it is impossible that our desires should rise higher then the spring from whence they come; the desires of nature cannot goe higher then nature; the desires of the flesh are fleshly: but spirituall desires, as they spring from heaven, (they have a noble originall, and head) so they carry to heaven againe. Therefore as the Spirit comes from God the Father and the Sonne; so it carries us backe againe to the Father, and the Sonne; as it comes from heaven, so it carries to heaven back againe. That is one way to know whether our desires be spirituall or no; our desire of death, and of the comming of *Christ*, if it be from wearisomnesse of life, and from afflictions in the world, so nature may desire. I were better be dead then to be thus; as *Ionas* wished death, and the children of Israel, and *Elias* in a passion; oh that I were dead, &c. but if those desires spring from the Spirit, then they come from heaven: from the consideration of the excellency of the state wee shall have there, that it shall be better with us, and that death is but a darke passage to a glorious condition. We may know our desires are spirituall from the rise of them, if they come from spirituall, and holy, and heavenly considerations: the Spirit doth all in the Spouse that is holy and spirituall.

Meanes to get the Spirit.

Therefore let us give entertainment to the Spirit of God, and be where we may have further, and further communion with the Spirit,

in

in ſpirituall Ordinances. The preaching of Gods holy Word, (though it be meanely eſteemed by the world) *it is the Miniſterie of the Spirit*; in the hearing of it, the Spirit is given: if we would have the Spirit, let us attend upon the Miniſterie of the Spirit. And let us ſtudy *Chriſt*, and make him all in all. Saint *Paul* queſtions with the *Galathians*, ſaith hee, I would know of you, *how came ye by the Spirit? by hearing of Chriſts Goſpel, or of the Law preached?* No, it was by the Goſpel: ſo that not onely the Miniſterie in generall, but the Evangelicall Miniſterie that unfolds *Chriſt*, and the infinite love of God in *Chriſt*, the excellent condition we have in this world, and look for in the world to come: the Spirit is effectuall with theſe thoughts to make us holy and heavenly. The Law beats downe; but the Goſpel, eſpecially theſe Evangelicall truths make us ſpirituall. Therefore wee ſhould be willing to heare ſpirituall points. There are a company of men, that love to heare curious and nice points, and if a Miniſter be quaint, and ſatyricall, and unfold points ſutable to their apprehenſion, they can digeſt this: but come to ſpeake of things above nature, of *Chriſt*, and the benefits by him; they are ſpirituall, they are remote, and tranſcendent above their nature, that they cannot reliſh them. But he that hath the Spirit of *Chriſt*, of all points, there are none to thoſe that unfold *Chriſt*, and the benefits by him, the glory that wee hope for by him in another world.

And

And let us not grieve the Spirit, but give way to his motions. The Spirit is now among us in his Ordinance knocking at our hearts, and desiring entertainement, let us give way, and not quench the good motions that hee stirres up, and the Spirit shall be given more and more to us; *The Holy-Ghost is given to them that obey him.* And let us beg the Spirit, God *will give his holy Spirit to them that aske him, Luk.* 11. Luke 11. As if hee should say, the Spirit is the best thing that God can give, you that are evill, can give *good things to your children*: but your heavenly Father hath one good thing instead of all, he will give his Spirit. Therefore, when wee find our hearts dead, and dull, and earthly, and base-minded, thinke thus: Alas, I am a lump of flesh now, where is the Spirit of God? certainely if I had the Spirit in me, I could not be as I am. If we love our soules, we will take this course, wee trifle with Religion else. God doth all by the Spirit, the Spirit is *Christs* Vicar: here is no need of a Ministeriall head betweene the Spouse and *Christ*, the Spirit and the Spouse are so neere together: there is such a conjunction betweene *Christ* and his Church, that where the Spirit is, hee stirres up desires of his comming. Onely let us attend upon the meanes, and Ordinances, that hee hath left in his Church. And let us consider wee are not for this life, we are not to live here alway: the child in the wombe is not for that life, and when it is in the world, it is not for this life,

there

there is a third life that we are for. An imperfect ſtate reſts not till it come to perfection: our beſt is behind: let thoſe that are naught, feare the ſecond comming of *Chriſt*. Let *Herod*, and *Iudas*, and the beaſt of *Rome* feare, that ſhall *be caſt into the burning lake*. Let *Felix* tremble, the corrupt Judge, and all that live in corrupt courſes. But wee that profeſſe our ſelves to be Chriſtians, and hope for better things in another world, let us labour to baniſh baſe feares: and to this end, let us labour to be ſpirituall, and not to be lead by the fleſh, *Whoſoever is Chriſts, hath the Spirit of Chriſt, or elſe he is none of his*, as it is ſweetly, and largely, and heavenly prooved, *Rom.* 8. We have nothing to doe with *Chriſt*, unleſſe we have his Spirit, to ſtirre up motions, and deſires of better things then this world can afford.

FINIS.

DAVIDS CONCLVSION: OR, THE SAINTS RESOLVTION.

In one Sermon.

By the late learned, and reverend Divine,

RICHARD SIBBS.

Doctor in Divinitie, Master of Katherine-Hall in *Cambridge*; and sometimes Preacher at *Grays-Inne*.

Ieremy 30. 21.

Who is this that ingageth his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?

James 4. 8.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

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DAVIDS CONCLVSION:

OR,

The Saints Resolution.

Psalme 73. 28.

But it is good for me to draw neare to God.

THis Psalm is a Psalm of *Asaph*, or a Psalm of *David*, and committed to *Asaph* the Singer: for *Asaph* was both a Seer, and a Singer. Those Psalmes that *David* made, were committed to *Asaph*, so it is thought to be a Psalm of *David*; and if not of *David*, yet of *Asaph*, that likewise was a Singer in the house of God.

The Psalm represents to us a man in a spirituall conflict; by a discovery of the cause

The contents of the Psalme.

of it, and a recovery out of the conflict, with a triumphant conclusion afterwards.

1. Act of fact.

He begins abruptly, as a man newly come out of a conflict, *Truly God is good to Israel*: as if hee had gained this truth in conflicting with his corruptions, (and Sathan who joynes with corruption in opposing:) say the flesh what it can, say Sathan what he can, say carnall men what they can; *yet God is good to Israel.*

2. A discovery.

After his conflict he sets downe the discovery, first of his weaknesse, and then of his doubting of Gods providence, and then the cause of it, the prosperity of the wicked; and Gods contrary dealing with the godly: then he discovers the danger he was come to, v. 13. *verily I have clensed my heart in vaine, and washed my hands in innocency, &c.*

Verse 13.

3. The recovery.

Verse 17.

And then the recovery in *verse* 17. *I went into the Sanctuary, and there I understood the end of these men.* The recovery was by going into the Sanctuary; not by looking upon the present condition: but upon Gods intention, what should become of such men, and there he had satisfaction.

4. The Victory. Verse 23.

Then his victory, and triumph over all, *verse* 23. *Nevertheless I am continually with thee.* It was a suggestion of the flesh that thou wast gone farre from mee: by reason of the condition of carnall men that flourish in the eye of the world. No; *Thou art continually with me, and thou holdest me by my right hand*; thou upholdest mee I should fall else. But what would

would God do so for the time to come? *he will guide me by his counsell*, while I live here, and when I am dead, what will he do fot me after? *hee will receive mee to glory:* whereupon saith hee, *who have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in earth that I desire besides thee.* Therfore, though for the present *my flesh faile*; yea and *my heart faile*; yet God is the *strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* Wee see here his victory set downe, and hee gives a lustre to it, by Gods contrary dealing with the wicked: *for loe, they that are far from thee, shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go awhoring from thee.* Now in the words of the text, you have his Conclusion upon all this, *nevertheless, it is good for mee to draw neere to God.*

The scope of the words.

This is the Conclusion upon the former principles; this is as it were the judgement upon the former demurrs; the sum of all comes to this: let all things be weighed, and laid together, I am sure this is true: *It is good for me to draw neere to God.* So he ends where he began, *God is good to Israel*; therfore because God is so good to *Israel*, *It is good to draw neere to God.* So you see in what order the words come; they are the words of a man got out of a conflict, after he had entred into the Sanctuary, and after he had considered the end of wicked men, at whose prosperity hee was troubled, and took scandall.

Before I come to the words, it is not amisse,

amisse, briefly to touch these points, to make way to that I am to deliver.

First of all that,

Gods children exercised with conflicts.

Gods deerest children are exercised with sharp spirituall conflicts.

God suffers their very faith in principles sometimes to be shaken. What is more cleare than Gods providence? not the noone day: yet God suffers sometimes his owne children to be exercised with conflicts in this kind, to doubt of principles written in the book of God (as it were) with a Sun-beame; that have a lustre in themselves. There is nothing more cleare, than that God hath a particular speciall providence over his; yet Gods wayes are so unsearchable, and deep, that hee doth spiritually exercise his children; hee suffers them to bee exercised, as you see here, hee comes out of a conflict: *but it is good for mee to draw neere to God.* I will but touch it, therefore I will extend it only to Gods people, that (if by reason of the remainders of corruption, God suffer their rebellious hearts to cast myre, and dirt, to cast in objections that are odious to the spirituall man, that part that is good) they may not be cast down too much, and dejected. It is no otherwise with them, than it hath beene with Gods deare children; as we see in *Ieremie*, *Habakuk*, and others. It is a cleare truth; I only poynt at it, that we might have it ready, to comfort our selves when such things rise in our soules;

it

it is no otherwise with us, than it hath beene with other of Gods deare children.

The second poynt is, that,

Gods children recover out of conflict.

Gods children when they are in this conflict they recover themselves.

God suffers them to be foiled; but then they recover themselves. First there is a conflict, and then oft times the foyle: a man is foyled by the worst part in him: and then after awhile he recovers, and then (as in other conflicts) there is triumph, and victory: as we see here, his conflict, and recovery.

Reas. Gods children go not far from him. Verse 27.

For Gods children go not farre off from him, (as it is in *verse 27. Loe, they that are far off from thee, shall perish*) they may have their thoughts unsetled a little concerning Gods providence: but they run not far off, they go not awhoring as carnal men do. They begin to slip; but God hath a blessed hand under them, to recover them, that they do not fall away, that they fall not foulely. They may slip, and fall a little to stand better, and surer after; but they go not farre off, as wicked men do: they never slip so low, but Gods goodnesse is lower to hold them up: hee hath one hand under them, and another hand above them, imbracing them, so that they cannot fall dangerously. This is the second, from this that wee see here, he recovers out of this conflict.

Vse. To discerne our estate.

Which may serve to discerne our estate in grace; if we belong to God, though such noysome imaginations rise, yet notwithstanding

ding there is a contrary principle of grace alway in Gods children that checks them, at the leaſt afterwards, if not preſently. Such noyſome thoughts as theſe rule, and reigne in carnall men: for they take ſcandall at Gods government, and they judge indeed that the wayes of wicked men are happy: they have falſe principles, and they frame their courſe of life to ſuch falſe principles, and rules: from cheriſhing athieſticall doubts of Gods providence, and the like. It is farre otherwiſe with Gods children: there are conflicts in them; but there is a recovery, they check them preſently; they have Gods ſpirit, and the ſeed of grace in them, that is never extinct.

The way to recover out of conflict to enter into Gods Sanctuary.

The way of recovery, is to enter into Gods Sanctuary: for wee muſt not give liberty to our ſelves to languiſh in ſuch a courſe; to look to preſent things too much: but look into Gods book, and there wee ſhall ſee what is threatned to ſuch, and ſuch ill courſes; and what promiſes are made to good courſes: and then apply Gods truth to the example; ſee how God hath met with wicked men in their ruffe, and advanced his children when they were at the loweſt; when they were even at the brink of deſpaire. Examples in this kind are pregnant, and cleare, throughout the Scripture. The Lord ſaith, *It ſhall go well with the righteous, and it ſhall not go well with the wicked, Let him eſcape a thouſand times.*

Doubtleſſe

Doubtlesse there is a reward for the godly. Let us look in the book of God, upon the predictions, and see the verefying of those predictions in the examples that act the rules, and bring them to the view: let us see the truthes in the examples. This entring into Gods Sanctuary it is the way to free us from dangerous scandalls, and to overcome dangerous conflicts: for the conclusions of the Sanctuary are cleane contrary to sensible carnall reason. Carnall reason saith, such a one is a happy man, sure he is in great favour, God loves him: oh but the Sanctuary saith, it shall never go well with such a mam. Carnall reason would say of *Dives*, oh, a happy man: but the Sanctuary saith, *he had his good here*, and *Lazarus had his ill here.* Carnall reason saith, is there any providence that rules in the earth? is there a God in heaven, that suffers these things to go so confusedly? I, but the word of God, the Sanctuary saith, there is a providence that rules all things sweetly, and that *all things are beautifull in their time.*

Benefit of entring the Sanctuary.

Different conclusions of Gods word, and carnall reason.

We must not look upon things in their confusion, but knit things, *Mark the end, mark the end of the righteous man, Psalme* 37. Look upon *Joseph* in prison, here is a horrible scandall: for where was Gods providence to watch over a poore young man: but see him after, *the second man in the Kingdome.* Look on *Lazarus* at the rich mans doore, and there is scandall: but see him after in *Abrahams* bosom. If we

To look to the end of Gods providence. Psal. 37.

wee see Christ arraigned before *Pilate*, and crucified on the Crosse; here is a scandall; that innocencie it selfe should be wronged: but stay awhile; see him at the right hand of God, ruling principalities and powers, subjecting all things under his feet.

Thus the Sanctuary teacheth us to knit one thing to another, and not brokenly to look upon things present, according to the dreams of mens devices; but to look upon the catastrophe, & winding up of the tragedy. Not to look on the present conflict, but to go to the Sanctuary, and see the end of all; see how God directs all things to a sweet end. *All the wayes of God (to his children) are mercy, and truth*; though they seeme never so full of anger, and displeasure. Thus you see, Gods children are in conflict oft times, and sometimes they are foyled in the conflict; yet by way of recovery, they go into the Sanctuary, and there they have spirituall eye salve; they have another manner of judgement of things, than flesh and blood hath.

The sight of faith draws us neere to God.

Againe, we see, when he went into the Sanctuary, the very sight of faith makes him draw near to God. Somtimes God represents heavenly truths to the eye of sense, in the examples of his justice. Wee see sometimes wicked men brought on the stage: God blesseth such a sight of faith, and such examples to bring his children nearer to him: as we see immediatly before the text, *thou wilt destroy*

all

all that go awhoring from thee, and then it followes, *It is good for mee to draw neare to God.* So that the spirit of God in us, and our spirits sanctified by the spirit, takes advantage when wee enter into the Sanctuary (and sees the divers ends of good, and bad) to draw us close to God.

Why God suffers different conditions of men.

Indeed that is one reason why God suffers different conditions of men to bee in the world (not so much to shew his justice to the wicked, as) that his children seeing of his justice, and his mercy, and the manifestation, and discovery of his providence in ordering his justice towards wicked men, it may make them cleave to his mercy more, & give a lustre to his mercie. *It is good for me to cleave to the Lord:* I see what will become of all others.

Gods children have a contrary course to the world.

The next that followes upon this; that Gods children thus conflicting, and going into the Sanctuary, and seeing the end of all there, *They goe a contrary course to the world.* They swim against the streame. *Similie.* As we say of the starrs, and Planets, they have a motion of their owne, contrary to that rapt motion, whereby they are carried, and whirled about in foure and twenty houres, from East to West; they have a creeping motion, and period of their owne; as the Moone hath a motion of her owne, backward from West to East that makes every moneth; and the Sunne hath a severall motion from the rapt motion hee is caried with,

with, that he goes about in a yeare. So Gods children they live, and converse, and are carried with the same motion as the world is: they live among men, and converse as men doe: but notwithstanding they have a contrary motion of their owne, which they are directed, and carried to by the Spirit of God: as here the holy Prophet saith; *It is good for mee to draw neare to God.* As if he should say, for other men, be they great or small, be they of what condition they will, let them take what course they will, and let them see how they can justifie their course, and take what benefit they can; let them reape as they sow; I doe not matter much what course they take, I will looke to my selfe: as for me I am sure this is my best course, to *draw neare to God.*

A Christians rule of life not from the world.

So the sanctified spirit of a holy man; hee looks not to the stream of the times, what be the currents, and opinions, and courses of rising to preferment, of getting riches, of attaining to an imaginary present happinesse here: but hee hath other thoughts, hee hath another judgement of things, and therefore goes contrary to the worlds course. Heare Saint *Paul*, *Phillip* 3. saith he there, *All men seek their owne, I cannot speak of it without weeping: whose end is damnation, whose belly is their God, who mind earthly things.* But what doth Saint *Paul*, when other men seek their owne, and are carried after private ends? oh saith he,

Phil. 3.

he, *our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour; who shall change our vile bodies, and make them like his glorious body; according to his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himselfe.* So you see the blessed Apostle, (led with the same spirit as the man of God here) he considers not what men do, he fetcheth not the rules of his life from the example of the great ones of the world, or from multitude: these are false, deceiving rules: but he fetcheth the rule of his life from the experimentall goodnesse he had found by a contrary course to the world. Let the world take what course they will, *it is good for me to draw neare to God.*

Corrupt courses of the world settle Gods children.

I might adde a little further, that *The course, and corrupt principles of the world, are so far from shaking a child of God, that they settle him.* They stir up his zeale the more. As we say; there is an *antiperistasis*, an increasing of contraries by contraries; as we see in winter the body is warmer, by reason that the heat is kept in; & springs are warmer in winter, because the heat is kept in. So the spirit of God in the hearts of his children, works, & boyles when it is invironed with contraries; it gathers strength, and breaks out with more zeale, as *David, Psal.* 119. when he see men did not keep Gods law; we see how he complaines to God, *It is time Lord for thee to work.* Indeed it is the nature of opposition to increase the contrary: those that have the spirit, and grace of God in truth, they gather strength by opposition. Therefore

Psalme 119.

Vse. Of triall.

Therefore the use we are to make of it, is to discerne of our selves, of what spirit wee are, what principles we lead our lives by, whether by examples of greatnesse, or multitude, or such like, it is an argument wee are led by the spirit of the world, and not by the spirit of God. Gods children as they are severed from the world in condition (they are men of another world) so they are severed from the world in disposition, in their course, and conversation: therefore from these grounds their course is contrary to the world. *But, it is good for me*; (*But*) is not in the originall, it is, *And it is good for me*; but the other is aimed at: the sense is, *But it is good for me to draw neere to God*, and so it is in the last translation. Thus you see what way we have made to the words. I do but touch these things, and it was necessary to say something of them: because the words are a triumphant Conclusion upon the former premises.

Doct. Wisdome justified of her children.

And in the words, in generall, observe this first of all, that, *God by his spirit inableth his children to justifie wisdome by their owne experience.*

To make it good by their owne experience, *It is good for me to draw neere to God.* And this is one reason why God suffers them to be shaken, and then in conflict to recover, that after recovery they may justifie the truth *nihil tam certum, &c.* nothing is so certaine as that that is certaine after doubting, nothing is so fixed

as

as that that is fixed after it hath been shaken: as the trees have the strongest roots, because they are most shaken with winds, and tempests. Now God suffers the understanding, that is, the inward man, of the best men to bee shaken, and after settles them; that so they may even from experience justifie all truths: that they may say it is naught, it is a bitter thing to sinne: Sathan hath abused mee, and my owne lust abused me, and intised mee away from God: but I see no such good thing in sinne, as nature perswaded me before. As travellers will tell men, you live poorely here; in such a country you may do wondrous well, there you shall have plenty, and respect; and when they come there, and are pinched with hunger, and disrespect, they come home with shame enough to themselves that they were so beguiled. So it is with Gods children: sometimes he suffers them to bee foyled, and lets them have the reines of their lusts awhile, to taste a little of the forbidden tree; that after they may say with experience, it is a bitter thing to forsake God, it is better go to my *former husband*, as the Church saith in *Hosea*, when God took her in hand a little, sinne will be bitter at the last. So the prodigall, he was suffered to range, till he was whipped awhile; and then he could confesse it was better to bee in his *fathers house*. God suffers his children to fall into some course of sinne, that afterward by experience they may justifie good things,

Gods children shaken, why?

Similie.

things, and be able to say that God is good.

And the judgement of such is more firme, and doth more good than those that have beene kept from sincking at all. God in his wise providence suffers this.

Vse. We should labour therefore to justifie in our owne experience all that is good. What is the reason that men are ashamed of good courses so soon? It may be they are perswaded a little to pray, and to sanctifie the Lords day, to retire themselves from vanity, and such like: I, but if their judgements be not setled out of the book of God, and if they have not some experience, they will not maintaine this; therefore they are driven off. Now a Christian should be able to justifie against all gainsayers whatsoever can bee said, by his owne experience; That to read the book of God, and to heare holy truths opened by men led with the spirit of God, it is a good thing: I find Gods spirit sanctifie me by it. To sanctifie the Lords day, I find good by it by experience. That where there is the communion of Saints; holy conference, &c. I can justifie it, if there were no Scripture for it: I find it by experience to bee a blessed way to bring me to a heavenly temper, to fit mee for heaven. So there is no good course, but Gods children should be able both by Scripture, and likewise by their owne experience to answer all gainsayers: when either their owne hearts, or others shall oppose it, he may bee able to

say

say with the holy man here, it is no matter what you say; *It is good for me to draw neere to God.* So much for the generall. To come more particularly to the words.

It is good for me to draw neare to God.

HEre you have the justification of piety, of holy courses, which is set downe by *drawing neare to God.* And the Argument whereby it is justified, *It is good.* This glosse put upon any thing, commends it to man: for naturally since the fall there is so much left in man, that hee drawes to that which is good: but when he comes to particulars, there is the errour, hee seekes heaven in the way of hell, he seekes happinesse in the way of misery, he seekes light in the way of darknesse, and life in the way and path of death; his lusts so hurry him, and carry him the contrary way: but yet there is left this generall foundation of Religion in all men; as the heathen could say, naturally all men from the principles of nature draw to that which is good. Here religious courses are justified, and commended from that which hath the best attractive, and most magnetticall force. *It is good to draw neere to God. Good* hath a drawing force: for the understanding that shewes, and discovers: but the will is the cheife guide in man; and answerable to the discovery of good or ill in the understanding, there is a prosecution or

averſation in the will, which is that part in the ſoule of man that cleaves to good diſcovered. To unfold the words a little.

[*It is good*] To draw neere to God who is the chiefe good. It is good in quality, and good in condition, and ſtate; It is good in quality and diſpoſition: for it is the good of conformity for the underſtanding creature to draw neare to God the Creator, who hath fitted the whole inward man to draw neare, to conforme to him.

And then it is good in condition: for it is his happineſſe to do ſo; the goodneſſe of the creature is in drawing neare to God. The nearer any thing is to the principle of ſuch a thing, the better it is for it: the nearer to the Sunne, the more light; the nearer to the fire, the more heat; the nearer to that which is goodneſſe it ſelfe, the more good; the nearer to happineſſe, the more happy: therefore it muſt needs be the happineſſe of condition to draw neare to God. So you ſee what is meant, when he ſaith here, *it is good*: It is a pleaſing good, conformable to Gods will, he commands it: and it is for my good likewiſe, it advanceth my condition to draw neare to God.

To go from God &c.

[*To draw neare*] what is it to draw neare to God, wee ſhall ſee by what it is to go from God. God is every where, wee are alwayes neare to God. *whither ſhall I go from thy preſence? If I go to hell, thou art there, &c.* ſaith the

the Pſalmiſt. God is every where indeed in regard of his preſence, & power, & diſpoſing providence but then there is a gracious preſence of God in the hearts of his children. And there is a ſtrange preſence of God to Chriſt, the preſence of Vnion; which makes the humane nature of Chriſt the happieſt creature that ever was, being joyned by a hypoſtaticall Vnion to the ſecond perſon; but wee ſpeak not of that nearneſſe here. There is a gracious neareneſſe, when the ſpirit of God in the ſpirits of thoſe that belong to God, ſweetly inlargeth, and comforts, and ſupports, and ſtrengthneth them, working that in them that hee works in the hearts of none elſe: for inſtance, The ſoule is in the whole man, it is diffuſed over all the members; it is in the foot, in the eye, in the heart, and in the braine: but how it is in all theſe? It is in the foot as it moves it, it is in the heart as the principle of life, it is in the braine, and underſtanding, uſing, and exerciſing, his reaſoning underſtanding power: ſo that though all the ſoule be in the whole man, yet it is otherwiſe in the braine than in the reſt; ſo, though God bee every where, yet hee is otherwiſe in his children than in others: he is in them graciouſly, and comfortably, exerciſing his graces in them, and comforting them; hee is not ſo with the reſt of the world: you ſee how God is preſent every where, and how hee is graciouſly preſent with his. So anſwerable wee are

3. *How God is negre us*

How wee are neare to God.

ſaid to be neare to God (we are neare him in what ſtate ſoever we are; but then) there is a gracious nearneſſe when our whole ſoule is neare to God, as thus: when our underſtandings conceive aright of God, as it is ſaid of the young man in the Goſpell, when hee began to ſpeak diſcreetly, and judiciouſly, *Thou art not farre from the Kingdome of God:* when menhave a right conceit of divine truths, they are not farre from the Kingdome of God; when there is clearneſſe of judgement to conceive aright. Thoſe that have corrupt principles, are farre off; if the underſtanding bee corrupt, all the reſt will go aſtray: there is the firſt nearneſſe when the judgement is ſanctified by the ſpirit to conceive aright.

1. *In our underſtanding.*

2. *In our minds.*

Then againe, there is a nearneſſe, when we not only know things aright, but mind them; when the things are preſent to our minds, when God is in our thoughts. *David* ſaith of the wicked man, *God is not in his thoughts.* When we mind, and think of God, and heavenly things, they are neare to us, and wee to them: For the ſoule is a ſpirituall eſſence, it goes every where, it goes to heaven, and is preſent with the things it minds; wee are nearer to God, and heavenly things, when wee mind them, and think on, and feed our thoughts on them.

3. *In our wills.*

Againe, wee are neare them when our wills firſt make choyce of the better part with *Mary*; when upon diſcovery of the underſtanding

ding, the will chuseth deliberatly: upon consideration followes the determination, and chusing of the will, and upon choice, cleaving, which is another act of the will; when it chuseth that which is spiritually best, every way best for grace, and condition, then it cleaves to it. As it is said of *Ionathan*, *his heart did cleave to David*: so the woman cleaves to her husband, as Saint *Paul* speaks: when the will chuseth, and cleaves to that which is good, then there is a drawing neare.

4. *In the affections*

And likewise when the affections are carried to God as their object, then there is a drawing neare to God, when our love imbraceth God, and heavenly things: for love is an affection of union, it makes the thing loved, and he that loveth to be one: it is the primary, the first borne affection of the soule, from which all other affections are bred, when we love God we desire still further, and further communion with him. And where there is love, if we have not that we e love, then the soule goes forth to God in desire of heavenly things; *the heart pants after God, as the Hart doth after the rivers of waters*, and after holy things, wherein the spirit of God is effectuall. And when we have it in any measure, then the soule shewes a sweet enlargement of joy, and delight in God. Thus when we judge aright of, and mind heavenly things, and make choyce of them, and cleave to God with all

Love.

Desire.

Ioy.

our affections of love, and joy, and delight, when these are carried to God, and heavenly things, then we draw neare to him.

Faith. And especially when the inward man is touched with the spirit of God, even as the Iron that is touched with the Load-stone, though it be heavy of it selfe, it will go up: so, when the inward man is touched by the spirit of God, with a spirit of faith, which is a grace by which we draw neare to God with trust: for it is confidence, and trust that drawes us neare to God. Faith it is wrought in the whole inward man, in the understanding, in the mind, in chusing, and cleaving: but especially it is in the will: for faith is described to bee a going to God, a comming to him, which is a promotion, or going forth, which is an act of the will, so by faith, and trust, specially we draw neare, and cleave to God. Even as at the first we fell from God by distrusting of his word, saith the Divell, *yee shall not die at all*, we beleeved a lier more than God himselfe. Now we are recovered by a way contrary to that we fell; wee must recover, and draw neare to God againe by trusting, and relying upon God. You see what is meant by the words, *It is good for me to draw neare to God.*

Doct. Conviction of the judgement, the ground of practise. To come to observe some things from them, first this, that,

Spirituall conviction of the judgement, it is the ground of practise.

It is good, and good for me; For we know in nature

nature that the will followes the last designe of the understanding; that which the understanding saith is to be done, here, and now all circumstances considered it is best, that the Will chuseth, and that a man doth: for the Will rules, and leads the outward man. Now where there is a heavenly conviction of the understanding of any particular thing, this at this time is good, all things considered; and weighed in the ballance, on the one side, and on the other; where this is, there comes in practise, and drawing near to God alway. Conviction is when a man is set down, so that he cannot gainsay nor will not, but fals to practice presently: then a man is convinced of a thing. That which is immediatly before practise, and leads to practise, it is conviction; Now there are these foure things in conviction.

4. *Things in conviction.*

There is first truth, a man must know that such a thing is true. Then it must not only be a truth, but a good truth; as the Gospell is said to be *the good word of God*, and *it is a true, and a faithfull saying*. It is a true saying, *that Christ came to save sinners*; and it is a faithfull, a good saying. If it bee not good as well as true; truth doth not draw to practice as it is truth, but as it is good.

As it must be truth, and a good truth, so it must be good for me, as the holy man saith here, *It is good for me, &c.* A thing may bee good for another man; the Divell knowes what is good; and that makes him envy

poore Chriſtians ſo; wicked men know that which is good, when they ſinne againſt the holy Hhoſt; but for them it is better to keep in the contrary: ſo that we muſt know it is a truth, and a good truth, and good for us in particular, that it is beſt for us to do ſo.

The fourth is this, though it be true, and good, and good for us; yet before we can come to practiſe, it muſt be a good that is comparative, better than other things that are preſented, or elſe no action will follow. A man muſt be able to ſay, this is better than that. A weak man that is led with paſſions, and luſts, he oftimes ſees the truth of things, and ſees they are good, and good for me, and wiſhes that he could take ſuch a courſe: but ſuch is the ſtrength of his paſſions at this time that it is better to do thus, it is better to yeeld to his luſts, and he truſts that God will be mercifull, and he ſhall recover it afterwards. Theſe foure things, therefore muſt bee in conviction, before wee can take the beſt courſe; and theſe are all here in this holy man: for he ſaw it was a truth, a duty, and likewiſe that it was a good truth: for to bee neare to God the fountaine of good, it muſt needs be good: And then it was good for him to be ſo: nay it was good, all things conſidered: for it is a Concluſion (as it were) brought out of the fire, out of a conflict; Nay ſay the fleſh, and ſay all the world what it can to the contrary, *It is good for me to draw neare to God*, he brings it in as a triumphant

triumphant Concluſion. Put drawing neare to God in one ballance, and lay in that ballance all the inconveniences that may fallow drawing neare to God; the diſpleaſure of great ones, the loſſe of any earthly advantage; and lay in the other ballance all the advantages that keep men from drawing neare to God: as if a man do not keep a good conſcience, he may pleaſe this or that man, hee may get riches, and advance himſelfe, and better his eſtate; conſider all that can bee, yet notwithſtanding, it is better to draw neare to God, with all the diſadvantages that follow that courſe, than to take the contrary: Thus you ſee the truth cleare, that conviction is the way, and foundation of practice.

Therefore we ſhould labour by all meanes to be convinced of the beſt things. It is not ſufficient to have a generall notion, and ſlightly to heare of good things: no, wee muſt beg the ſpirit of God that hee would ſeale, and ſet them upon our ſoules, and ſo ſtrongly ſet, and ſeale them there, that when other things are preſented to the contrary, with all the advantages, and colours, and gloſſes that fleſh and blood can ſet upon them: yet out of the ſtrength of ſpirtuall judgement wee may bee able to judge of the beſt things out of a ſpirituall conviction, and to ſay it is beſt to cleave to God. So ſaid the bleſſed man of God *Moſes*, there was in the one end of the ballance, the pleaſures of ſinne, the

Vſe.
To labour for conviction.

the honours of a Court, there was all that earth could afford: for if it bee not to bee had in a Princes Court, where is it to bee had? his place was more than ordinary, hee was accounted the sonne of *Pharoh's* daughter: yet lay all that in the ballance; and in the other part of the ballance, to draw neare to Gods people; though the people of God were a base, fore-lorne, despised, afflicted people at that time: yet notwithstanding to draw neare to the cause of Religion, the disgraced cause of Religion, to draw neare to God when hee is disgraced in the world (it is easie to draw neare to God when there is no opposition) but to draw neare to Gods part, and side, when it is disgraced in the world, *Moses* saw it the best end of the ballance, put in the afflictions, and disgrace of Gods people, or what you will. So it was with *Abraham* when hee followed God (as it were) blind-fold, and left all, his fathers house, and the contentments he had there. So it was with our Saviours Disciples, they left all to follow Christ: they were convinced of this; surely we shall get more good by the company of Christ, than by those things that we leave for him.

Prophanesse whence it is.

Let us labour therefore to be convinced of the excellency of spirituall things, & then spirituall practice will follow. And undoubtedly the reason of the prophane conversation of the world, it comes from hidden atheisme:

iſme: that men make no better choyce than they do, that they draw not neare to God; let them ſay what they will, it proceeds from hence. I prove it thus; when men are convinced of good things, they will do good: for conviction is the ground of practiſe, and when men do not take good courſes, it is becauſe they are not convinced of the beſt things. Therefore men that ſweare, and blaſpheme, that are carnall bruit perſons, at that time Atheiſme rules in their hearts; that they beleeve not theſe things in the book of God to be true. Can the ſwearer beleeve that *God will not hold him guiltleſſe that takes his name in vaine: that a curſe ſhall follow the ſwearer?* and the whoremonger, *that whoremongers and adulterers God will judge?* and ſo the covetous, and extortioners, (they that raiſe themſelves by ill means) *ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven*, can men beleeve this, and live in the practiſe of theſe ſinnes? (if they did beleeve theſe things indeed, as the word of God ſets them downe, if they did beleeve that ſin were ſo bitter, and ſo foule a thing as the word of God makes it) certainly they would not: therefore it comes from a hidden Atheiſme. Indeed there is a bundle of Atheiſme, and infidelity in the heart of man, and we cannot bewaile it too much: In the beſt there are ſome remainders of it: as this holy man, *ſo fooliſh was I, and as a beaſt before thee*, when he thought of his doubting of Gods providence.

dence. Therefore conſidering that the cauſe of all ill practiſe, is that we are not ſpiritually convinced of the contrary, that ſinne is a naughty, and bitter thing; nor are wee ſufficiently convinced of the beſt things, let us labour more and more to be ſoundly convinced of theſe things.

The holy Ghoſt convinceth. Iohn 16.

Now, nothing will do this but the holy Ghoſt, as yee have it *Iohn 16. Chriſt promiſeth to ſend the Comforter, the holy Ghoſt, and he ſhall convince the world of ſinne:* that is, hee ſhall ſo ſet ſin before the eyes of mens ſoules, that they ſhall know there is no ſalvation but in Chriſt; hee ſhall convince them of unbeliefe, that horrible ſinne; they ſhall have it preſented ſo to them, that they ſhall beleeve preſently upon it. This the holy Ghoſt muſt do.

The holy Ghoſt convinceth in the uſe of meanes.

But the holy Ghoſt doth it in the uſe of meanes; therefore it muſt be our wiſdome, to heare, and pray, and meditate much, that God would vouchſafe his ſpirit to perſwade us, to convince our underſtanding, to convince us of all our falſe reaſonings againſt good things; that there may not a vile imagination riſe in our hearts contrary to divine principles.

Application to the Sacrament.

It is good to draw neare to God: therefore it is good to come to the Sacrament, which is one way of drawing neare to God. Let us be ſo convinced of it, that it is not only a neceſſary, but a comfortable, and ſweet duty

duty to have communion with God: for will we suffer for Christ if wee will not feast with him? What shall wee say of those therefore, that are so farre from drawing neare to God when they have these opportunities, that they turne their backs? They cleane thwart this blessed man here, he saith, *It is good for me to draw neare to God*; nay say they, it is good for mee to have nothing to do with God, nor Christ, no not when he comes to allure mee. Now hee is come neare us indeed, that wee might come neare him: because wee were strangers to God, and could not draw neare to him simply considered, God became man, *Emmanuel*, God with us, that he might bring us to God. Christ is that *Iacobs* ladder that knits heaven and earth together; Christ, God and man, knits God and man together: this was the end of his incarnation, and of his death, to make our peace, to bring those neare that were strangers, nay, enemies before, and of our part and portion in the benefit of his death, we are assured in the Sacrament. Therfore let us draw neare to our comfort, with chearefulnesse, for his goodnesse that we have these opportunities. Let us draw neare to God to have our faith strengthned, and our commuion with him increased.

Only let us labour to come with cleane hearts, *God will be sanctified in all that come neare him*. Let us know that we have to deale with a holy God, and with holy things, and therefore

fore caſt aſide a purpoſe of living in ſinne, let us not come with defiled hearts: for then, though the things be holy in themſelves, they are defiled to us; let us come with a reſolution to renew our covenant, and come with rejoycing that God ſtoups ſo low, to uſe theſe poore helps, that in themſelves are weak, yet by his bleſſing they are able greatly to ſtrengthen our Faith.

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FINIS.

KING DAVIDS EPITAPH:

OR,

An Epitome of the life and death of King DAVID.

In three Sermons.

By

The late learned, and reverend Divine

RICHARD SIBBS.

Doctor in Divinitie, Master of Katherine-Hall in *Cambridge*; and sometimes Preacher at *Grays-Inne*.

Luke 1. 74, 75.

That we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him in holinesse and righteousnesse before him, all the dayes of our lives.

2 Sam. 14. 14.

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground.

LONDON,

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KING *DAVIDS* EPITAPH.

Acts 13. 36.

For David *after in his owne Generation he had ſerved the Counſell (or will of God) he fell aſleep, and was laid to his Fathers, and ſaw corruption.*

THe words are part of a Sermon of bleſſed Saint *Paul*, wherein he proves out of the old Teſtament *Pſal.* 16. that *David* propheſied of Chriſt, and not of himſelfe. *David* ſaw corruption; but hee of whom *David* ſpake, ſaw no Corruption: therefore *David* was not the Meſſias. He ſhewes that the things there ſpoken, do no way agree to *David*, but to the Meſſias, who ſaw no corruption: For *David after hee had ſerved his owne Generation*

fell asleep and saw corruption. In generall observe this;

How to understand the Scriptures.

One of the best wayes to understand the Scriptures, is to compare the old Testament and the new together.

That which was spoken, and fore-told of Christ in the old Testament; and fulfilled in the New, that must needs bee true. Christ is the true Messias; why? It was fore-told so of him in the old Testament, and accomplished in the new: therefore Christ is the true Messias, comparing the propheſie, and the event together. For the old, and new Testament make up but this syllogisme: He that should be so, and so as was propheſied: Born of a Virgin; that should come at such a time in the later end of *Daniels* weeks &c. he is the true Messias: But Christ was such a one, hee was borne of a Virgin, came at such a time, he saw no corruption: for hee rose the third day: therefore Christ is the true Messias.

Gods children leave a good name.

Againe, you see the holy Ghost here could not mention *David* without termes of honour; *David* after he had served the will of God in his Generation, &c. Precious to God is both the life and death of his Saints. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. The name of *Iosias* is as an oyntment poured out: so indeed the names of holy men are as oyntment poured out, they sweeten men when they are gone. *Davids* bodie was buried among

among them: but *David* hada better Tomb, hee was buried in the beſt monument, in the hearts, and remembrance of Gods people; and in the remembrance of God. God wraps him up as a valiant man in his owne collours. He mentions not *David* barely here, but his ſerving the will of God.

Let wicked men caſt what aſpertions they will upon the names of Gods people: let them eclipſe them, and cloud them as they pleaſe, as their malice inſtigates them therein; the names and reputations of Gods people are not in their keeping, and power: For *David* ſhall have a good name (in ſpight of all the *Doeg's* and *Shemeits*, when they are rotten bodie and name together) wee ſee here many hundred yeares after he is mentioned with titles of honour. It ſhould incourage us therfore to ſerve God as wee regard a good name.

Savoury language of Scripture.

Mark here the language of the holy Ghoſt, the language of *Canaan*. When hee ſpeaks of a good man, hee ſpeaks of him in ſavorie termes: he doth not ſay that *David* after hee had been ſo long, or lived ſo long, or reigned, and flouriſhed ſo long: (as wee ſee in ſtories ſuch a man lived, or reigned, &c. ſo long and then died:) yet this had beene true, after hee had lived, and reigned ſo long hee died. But that is not the language of the holy Ghoſt; but after hee had ſerved God ſo long. The Scripture values men by that that God values them,

them, and not as men do, by their life, and reign, and flouriſhing in the world, and their eſteem with men, but as his carriage hath been to God. *David* ſerved the will of God in his generation.

And then when he ſpeaks of his death, *he fell aſleep*: he ſweetens the harſh name of death, with a ſweet term the Scripture puts upon it. It is a comfortable thing to conſider the very language of the Scripture, how ſavoury and heavenly it is, raiſing us up to comfortable and heavenly thoughts, even from the very manner of the phraſe. Different (as I ſaid) is the phraſe of Scripture from other hiſtories, that ſay, ſuch a man lived, and reigned ſo long, and then he died. And indeed a man may ſay of a wicked man, he was ſo long in the world, but if he did no good, a man can ſcarce ſay that he lived: for what is life without doing good, but a meer being in the world? Or if his life be ill, we may ſay, ſuch a man troubled the world ſo many years, & then went to his own place, as it is ſaid of *Judas*: but this is the Epitaph of a holy man, he ſerved God ſo long, and then he ſlept, and had happineſſe of God; another manner of Epitaph than other men have when they are gone. This I obſerve from the very language or phraſe: *David when he had ſerved the will (or counſell) of God*, as the Word is.

Again in the third place obſerve this in generall, that God ſets down *David* here only

only as he was a good man, and passeth by all his infirmities and breaches: whereas alas *Davids* life was woven with good and ill: there were some ill spots in that excellent garment; there were some ill parenthesis made in that excellent speech; there was somewhat (by the infirmity of man) that was not so good: but doth God speak of that when he mentions *David*? Oh no! But *David* after he had served God in his generation, &c. The spirit of God in Saint *Paul*, passeth by all that was amisse, and sets down that which is good; to shew us this comfortable point, that God values those that are in Christ, (and have repented of their sinnes) not by what they have been, or have done at some time: but by what they are, and what they resolve to be.

By what God values his children.

God values them by their better part, by that that is his in them, by that that is spirituall in them. He iudgeth them by the tenour of their lives, and not by a particular flaw in their lives. This is Gods infinite mercy, when he pardons, he pardons absolutely, he forgets as well as forgives: therefore the phrase of Scripture runs, *He will cast our sins behinde his back, & cast them into the bottome of the sea, that they shall never rise up in remembrance.* When we have once repented of our sinnes, they are to him as if they had never been done; they are as things forgotten. *Peter*, after his foul fall, he was not so much as upbraided by Christ in particular, Thou hast denied me, &c.

onely Christ comes sweetly over him with a question, *Lovest thou me?* he tels him not, thou hast betrayed me thus and thus: no, he doth not so much as upbraid him with the mention of it. So curious is God for troubling the peace of his people, that when they have soundly repented of their sins, they shall never hear of it to their confusion, nor at all, except it be to better them, and to perfect the work of humiliation.

Contrary to the fashion of the corrupt poysonfull nature of man: if they have but one thing (in all a mans life) to hit him in the teeth with, he shall be sure to hear of it oft enough, and passe by whatsoever is good in him. God doth not so with his children, but though they have some breaches in their lives, he passeth by them, and takes notice of that which is good in them; as we see here the Apostle doth, being directed by the spirit of God.

Why the matter of Vriah so objected to David?

But though God so sweetly passe by *Davids* faults when he mentions him, & cals him a man after his own heart, &c. yet there is one thing that God puts in as a scarre upon *David*. he was a man after Gods own heart; in all things, but in the matter of *Vriah*. Why doth that come in Scripture? Surely God mentions that, because that was done with more deliberation and advice, it was done in cold bloud; it was not infirmitie, but presumption in that. Now the more will there

there is in any action of ſinne, the more hainous the ſinne is, the more the guilt is increaſed. There was more will in that: for it was not done in heat of paſſion, but deliberatly: therefore it was a foule act. The ſpirit of God takes notice both of the good, & of the evill; as we ſee in the Epiſtles, (in *Rev.2.*) to the Churches, he had found fault with them before, (and (indeed God diſcerns directly where wee are to blame) *yet this thou haſt, that thou haſt the works of the Nicholaitans*, &c. If there be any good, God takes notice of it. *David* after he had repented of that foule ſinne, and was ſharply corrected for it (as indeed he was,) *David* was a good man for all that, *hee ſerved God in his Generation.* Rev.2.

But (to give you an item by the way) however God paſſed by the ſinne in *David*, and accounted him after his repentance a good man; yet he muſt be ſharply corrected for it. Let no man therefore preſume upon this that God will iudge him by the tenour of his life; and therefore hee will commit particular enormities: oh no! it coſt *David* deare: for beſides his heart-ſmart in his owne particular (God made his heart bleed, it coſt him many a ſalt tear, beſides that) it was puniſhed in his poſteritie: God rayſed up his own bowels to take armes againſt him; hee made him wiſh a thouſand times that he had not ſo offended God. It is ill trying concluſions with God; though God afterwards pardon us,

God corrects his ſharply for their ſinnes.

us, and turne all to good; yet it shall cost us deare first. Though God will bring us to heaven: yet if we will venture upon sinnes against conscience, and take libertie to offend God, he will take sharp courses with us, yet it shall not preiudice our salvation; you see those sins of *David* after he had repented & was corrected for them, they were forgotten, and *David* (in regard of the course of his life) served God; his life was a service of God notwithstanding some particular actions. These things may be usefull to the best of us all: therefore I observe them in generall from Gods manner of mentioning *David* here with honour; and passing by his infirmities. To come more particularly to the words.

Then David after he had served in his Generation, the will of God, &c.

THe words are a short Epitome of the life and death of the blessed man *David*. First, I will speak of his life, and then of his death. In his life there are these two parts:

First, the time in which he lived, when this service was done: *In his Generation.*

And then the manner of his carriage in that time of his generation, It was a service of God, *He served God.*

And this service of God is set down by the object of it; *God.* By the rule of his worship; *the will of God.* Hee served God, but how?

how? as he had revealed his will to him, not at randome: God will be served according to his own will. And then here is the act, *he served*. So here is the proper obiect of worship, *God*, in whom all our service is terminate; whatsoever we do it must rest in him; if we do good works to men, it must be for Gods sake, we must serve God in it. Then here is the proper rule carrying us to that obiect, *his Will*. And then it must be a service, it must be done in obedience to God. *David in his Generation served the will (or counsell) of God*, as the Word is. For his death, we shall speak of it after.

First, for the time, *In his generation.* [*Generation.*] in the Scripture, signifies a succession of men one after another, as you have it in *Matth.* 1. from such a one to such a one, so many generations, so many successions. You know in the Latine tongue, *seculum*, is taken for an age, or generation; the space of an hundred years: though *Moses* shut up the life of man in a shorter time. Succession of one man after another, is a generation. Generation, sometimes in a generall sense, is taken for all of one kinde. The generation of *Noah*, and the generation of the righteous, that is, all of that kinde, without restraining it to succession. But most commonly it is the consideration of men from succession of them; having the tearm from the way whereby we enter into the world, that is, by generation; therefore

The time.

Matth. 1. Generation, what it is.

therefore the succession of men from one to another, is called Generation.

Now here, Generation implies both the times, and the persons. The persons of men are a severall generation, and the time wherein they live is a generation, and both are here included: *David in his Generation* (among the age of men, and in the time wherin he lived) *served God*. The meaning of the place is clear. The points considerable here, are,

First of all, that there is a generation, a succession of men one after another.

Secondly, that every man hath his particular generation, *David* had his generation, wherin he served the Lord.

Thirdly, that *he served God in his Generation*, that is, the whole time of his Generation: yet with this limitation, he served God only in his generation while he was here, before he came to heaven. In heaven there is a kinde of service, but it is not by way of work, but of reward. We must serve God in our generation here. If ever we look to reap hereafter, we must sow now. *David served God in his generation.*

Obser. There is a succession of men.

First of all, There is a generation, a succession of men.

Particular men go off the stage; but the *species*, the kinde is eternall; kinds of things continue for ever. Man dies not, but *Paul* and *Peter* and *David* die: there is a succession of particular men. It is with men, as it is with the waves of the sea; one wave goes away, and another

another comes after. It is with men as it is with trees: for men are compared in Scripture to trees: trees of righteousnesse; and man, take him in his nature, is like a tree: the Poet could say to that purpose; it is with men as with trees, some leaves fall off in Autumne, and others come in their place the next spring: so it is with men, they have their severall Generations; there is an Autumne, a decay, and there is a spring of them, *there is a succession of Generations.*

Vse 1. To make use of our short time.

To teach us this lesson, that, our time being short here; (every man hath his generation; one Generation goeth away and another commeth, as the Scripture saith: wee must be laid to our Fathers, and others must stand up in our place; *Rise up* Iosua; *for* Moses *my servant is dead,* (saith the Lord:) one servant of God dies, and another rises. There bee many that must act their parts in this world, therefore some must go off the stage, that others may come on) therefore while we have time here, let us be sure to do good, before we be take away, suddenly, we know not how soon and there be no more generation. Here there will be a succession of generations till wee all meet in heaven, & then there wil be no succession, there shall be no more death; but as the Apostle saith, *we shalbe for ever with the Lord.*

Vse 2. To make sure an eternall Generation.

And it should teach us likewise (considering that in regard of our being and naturall condition in the world, there are severall successions,

ceſſions, generation after generation, that now we are here, and preſently after no more ſeen in the world) to make ſure an eternall generation, to be borne anew of the immortall ſeed that never dies, as Saint *Peter* ſaith, that tends to immortality; there is no death in that birth. A Chriſtian as hee is a new creature, hath a generation to eternitie, hee never dies. In regard of our being here, there is generation after generation, ſucceſſions of men: but when wee are new borne, though wee ceaſe to be here, we go to heaven. *He that beleeves in mee* (ſaith Chriſt) *ſhall never die. Man that is borne of a Woman* (ſaith Job) *hath but a ſhort time to live, and* (that ſhort time) *is full of miſery*: but man that is borne of the ſpirit, hath an eternall time to live, and that a happie life. All fleſh is graſſe in regard of this life we lead, which is ſupported with meat, and drink, and the comforts of this life: all fleſh is graſſe, and the beauty of it as the flower of the graſſe; but the Word of God indureth for ever; and as Saint *Iohn* ſaith, *hee that doth the will of God, indureth for ever.* The word of God indures for ever, becauſe it makes us (having the ſpirit of God) to indure for ever. The world paſſeth, and the luſts of it, but he that doth the will of God, (that is, new borne by the word of God, and transformed to the obedience of God, he) abides for ever. Would you abide for ever, and not paſſe from alteration to alteration, (as wicked men) they alter, and come to nothing,

thing, and worse than nothing) then labor for this estate, this is the way to abide for ever: this life hath no date of daies, no death.

To get into Christ by faith.

Labour to plant our selves in Christ by faith, that so in him wee may have an eternall estate. *Thou art our habitation from generation to generation.* It was a Psalme that was made upon occasion of their falling away in the Wildernesse; they dropped away as leaves, and few of them came to *Canaan*: Well, (saith he) we fall away here, and wither as grasse, &c. But thou art our God from generation to generation, that is, wee have a perpetuall subsistence in thee. A Christian when hee is in God (by being in Christ) hath a perpetuall everlasting subsistence. As we are Temples of God: so he is our Temple, wee dwell in him, *thou art our habitation, &c.* Who would not labour to bee in such an estate? for in this world there is nothing, but a succession of Generations.

Psal. 90.

Obser.
Every man hath his particular generation.

Secondly, *Every man hath a particular generation.* There is some emphasis in this: *David in his generation:* For men drop not into the world at all adventure: but every man hath his own time appointed, when to come into the world, and when to goe out, some in one time, and some in another. Therfore the times wherein they live are foreknown of God: he hath set downe when such a man shall be borne, in such an age of the world; so long he shall live, such work hee shall do, and when he hath done

done his worke, he shall be taken away hence, and another shall come, and stand up in his place. So every man hath his owne generation designed, and appointed, and ordained by God himselfe from all eternity; not only his generation, but all the circumstances of it, the very place of his abode, the time, and season, and country where he shall live, all are set downe.

Vse.
To observe in what Generation we live.

It is usefull for this end, to observe in what times our lot is fallen, to what times God hath reserved us, what generation, and age we live in: to consider of the state of the times. Are they good? blesse God that hath reserved us to those times. We pittie some good men that lived in ill times; as our Countrie-men in Queene *Maries* time, and other dark times; they were worthy men, and it was pitty they lived not in better ages: certainly they would have beene excellent men then: Therefore we should blesse God for reserving us to better times. What makes the times better? The discovery of salvation by Iesus Christ: the discovery of the meanes of happinesse in another world: In what age there is a cleerer discovery, where there is most spirit working together with the outward meanes: that is a blessed age: the spirit of God was not working so much in former times of darknesse, and Popery. Then there were many that followed the Beast to their eternall destruction, though God had mercy on many soules that

1.
To blesse God if they be good.

followed

followed him. As it is ſaid in Scripture, *they followed* Abſalom *in the ſimplicity of their hearts, not knowing whither they went:* ſo they followed Popery in the ſimplicity of their hearts, not knowing the danger, God had mercy on them; yet certainly, thouſands of them were wrapped up in darknes: they were miſerable times then. Thoſe that know Popery wil ſay ſo; thoſe that read the ſtory will ſay ſo: the world was wrapped in wars, and miſeries in thoſe times.

In what reſpect theſe times are.

It is true, our times are not ſo good as they ſhould be, and in many regards they are miſerable times: and we muſt not murmure at this diſpenſation of God, if God hath ſo appointed that our lot ſhall be to live in hard, and ill times. I ſay in ſome reſpects theſe are bad times: for the world, the older it growes, the worſe it is; As it is in a ſinck, the further it goes, the more ſoyle it gathers: ſo al the ſoyle of former times are met in the ſinck of later times, & in that reſpect this generation is an ill generati: but if we conſider what makes times good, the manifeſtatiõ of Chriſts glorious Goſpel (that hath ſhined fora hundred yeere, & more in our Church) the diſcovery of the means of ſalvation ſo cleerly, the abundance of the ſpirit with the meanes, making men to apprehend the means, enlightning their underſtandings to make uſe of them, and working their hearts to obedience: look in what age theſe are, they are happie times. Witneſſe our Saviour (and he is the beſt Iudge;) *Happie are the eyes that ſee*

Miſerable.

Simile.

2.
Happie.

the things that yee see, and the eares that heare the things that you heare. Oh! in former times if they had seene that that wee see, and heard that that wee heare, they would have accounted themselves happy: Oh! those that lived two hundred yeeres ago (though they were good men) if they had lived to see that that we see, and to heare that that we heare, (living in the glorious lustre and Sun-shine of the Gospell) how would it have reioyced them? Therefore as we have cause to consider of the ills of the time, and generation, that wee bee not swayed away with them: so we have cause on the other side to blesse God, that hath reserved us to these times of knowledge. In regard of the ills we may say with Saint *Austin*. *Lord to what times are we reserved!* But in regard of the good things wee may say, blessed be God that hath reserved us for these things: that he hath cast our time thus, that we should be borne in this generation, in the blessed time of the Gospell, in this second spring of the Gospell: We should blesse God for it.

August.

Vse. 2.
To be bettered by the good in the generation.

Well; but that is not all: we are to be accountable to God for the time and means we enjoy here in our generation. If wee bee not the better for it, wee shall bee so much the worse. It had beene better for us to have beene borne in times of Popery, and darknesse, in places of ignorance, than living in the glorious times of the Gospell, and in places where the light is discovered, and to be naught

in

in the middeſt of ſuch light. Thoſe that are bad now, are very bad: wee ſee by experience, that of all men, the moſt outragious wretched perſons are thoſe that are ill in good places: for God gives them up to more than an ordinary meaſure of prophaneſſe. A man ſhall have better, and more civill uſage; hee ſhall ſee better carriage in a Pagan, than in many Chriſtians that are not good under the meanes. There bee degrees of thoſe that are naught; ſome God gives up to a prophane ſpirit in the middeſt of the means: a fearfull brand. Thoſe that are bad now in the glorious times of the Goſpell, their ſinnes are preſumptuous ſinnes: they are not damned ſimply for ſinning, ſo much as for ſinning againſt the meanes, for ſinning againſt ſuch light, for ſinning in theſe times; Thoſe that lived in darkneſſe they could do no better. What; to be ſwearers now! to be licentious, diſordered perſons now! to contemne holy things now! to bee corrupt in our callings now! In this generation when the light of the Goſpel hath ſo gloriouſly ſhined! what excuſe can men have for their ſinnes now? Certainly it ſhall agravate their damnation that they were children of darkneſſe in the middeſt of light: nothing will trouble their conſciences ſo much as that they have offended againſt ſo many meanes, and ſo many helps as they had in the dayes they lived in. I beſeech you therefore, as wee ſhould bleſſe God for reſer-

Sinnes under means greater.

ving us for theſe times and places of knowledge, and light: ſo let us take heed leſt they be a meanes of aggravating our damnation afterward; that we ſhall wiſh that wee had never beene borne in ſuch times, but rather in times of darkneſſe. It ſhall go better with our fore-Fathers, that lived in darker times, than with us, if wee live in prophane and ungodly courſes.

Vſe. 3. Not to be tainted with the ſinnes of our generation.

Now there is no generation ſo good, but there bee groſſe ſinnes in all times, and generations: therefore let every man bee carefull (as to conſider the good of the generation, to take good by it; ſo likewiſe) to conſider the ſinnes of the time wherein he lives, that he be not tainted with the ſins of that generation. Gods children have a counter-motion, a contrary motion, to the motion of wicked perſons in every generation: therefore in our generation let us do as *David* did in his generation, ſtand againſt the ills of the times; go againſt the ſtream in that which is ill. It is the commendation you ſee in the old Teſtament; *Noah was a good man in his generation*; and ſuch, and ſuch, were good men in their generations. *David in his generation ſerved God*, and yet the times were naught: *help Lord* (ſaith he) *for godly men periſh from the earth*. The times were naught when hee lived: there was *Doeg*, and *Achitophell*, and *Shemei*, and other wicked men: yet *David was a good man in his generation*, hee was not

Pſal. 12.

carried

carried with the ſtream of the times.

A godly man conſiders who are good, and who are naught in his generation, and hee walks to heaven with thoſe that are good, though they be never ſo few; he goes in a contrarie motion to others, he doth not conforme to the world, *Rom.* 12. *he faſhions not himſelfe according to the world*, according to the wicked men in the generation he lives in: but he faſhions himſelfe to them that are of another world, that go a contrarie way to the world. Rom. 12.

Every generation hath a Genius both for manners and ſtudie: former times they were given to Barbariſme: now theſe times are more refined for outward reſpects. So for ſinnes; every age hath particular ſinnes that reigne; Superſtition in former times: but now the cleane contrary; Prophaneſſe, Atheiſme, hardneſſe of heart againſt the light, Preſumption, Looſeneſſe, and the like. Now theſe being the ſinnes of our times, we ſhould go ſo much the ſtronger againſt the ſtream of Prophaneſſe, and Atheiſme. The Divell diſcovers himſelfe in divers ſhapes, in divers generations: ſometimes hee prevailes with ignorance; and then hee is a ſpirit of darkneſſe: ſometimes hee is a ſpirit of Prophaneſſe, and Looſeneſſe. Now conſider by what ſinnes the Divell hath moſt advantage, and be ſure to ſet our ſelves againſt them.

Vſe 4. *To ſet our ſelves againſt the ſinnes of our generation.*

Divers ſinnes in divers ages.

And let every one in his place, labour to make

Vſe. 5.

To labour to make the Generation wee live in, good.

make the generation we live in as good as we can. Why doth God speak thus honourably of *David*? *He served God in his generation*; that time was the better for him. Wee have all cause to blesse God for such men, they are blessed men. Let every one of us in our generation carry our selves so, that when wee are gone, it may be said; such a man did much good in his time, and place, and hindred much ill. What a blessed thing is it when in our generation wee hinder all the ill, and do all the good we can! that others may say to our comfort, and credit, the times, and place was the better for such a man. Beloved, every one of us hath his generation: some have a longer generation, some a shorter; some have a longer glasse appointed to runne out; some their glasse is runne out in a shorter time: Well, be it longer or shorter; let us be carefull that we trifle not out our generation, and time wherein we live unprofitable; that little part of time that God hath given us to work in, let us be sure to bestir our selves in our generation, we know not how long or short our generation is.

Alas, if most men aske their owne consciences, wherefore they live; what is the life of many, but an annoyance? they infect the ayre with their oaths; they are a burthen to the earth; they mis-spend the blessings of God: but what hath the times beene the better for them? their lives have beene scandalous, wicked,

wicked, and vicious. It should be our glory to shine in our times, *as lights in the midst of a sinfull generation.* I beseech you therefore let us take the counsell of holy Saint *Paul. Gal. 6. while we have time, let us do good:* while we have a part to act here upon the Stage of this world, let us act our parts; do that wherfore we came into the world. Wee have not assurance from God that our generation shall hold thus long, or thus long: therefore whatsoever wee have to do, let us do it presently, let us reforme our wicked lives presently, *before wee go hence and bee no more seene.* And for the good wee have to do, do it presently; put it not off: no man is assured of his continuance here. Gal. 6.

In the next place, *David served God in his generation,* hee did not do it by starts, and fits; he did not do this or that good act: but he served God in his whole generation: So must every man, not only bee content to do now and then a good action; for the veriest wicked man in the world may do good sometimes, and the best men may do ill sometimes: but in the whole course of our life, we must do good in our generation, our course must bee holy, the whole tenour of our lives while wee are in the world. All things have their time, but there is no time for sinne, there is no time for vanity, no time for swearing, no time for sensuality, and loosnesse. 3. *Wee must serve God our whole time.*

Therefore let the whole course of our lives be

be ſpent in the ſervice of God. What do we know but that that little time wherein wee yeeld to the ſervice of the Divell, may be the time when God will fetch us hence? and what will become of us then? therfore reſolve not a moment to ſerve ſinne; our whole time is but ſhort in reſpect of eternity: what is our generation to world without end? Therefore let us be content to ſerve God our whole generation.

We muſt ſerve God in our life time.

He ſerved God in his generation, that is, in his life-time, while he was here: for God hath placed us in the world to do him ſome work. This is Gods working place, he hath houſes of work for us: now, our lot here is to do work; to be in ſome calling, and courſe to work for God. We are not ſent here into the world to play, or to live idly. Religion is no vocall profeſſion: every man muſt have ſome calling or other, and in his generation he muſt do good: For what will our account be afterwards elſe, when we ſhall give an account to God how we have ſpent our time in our generation? what good wee did, what ill wee hindred? It will be a fearfull account; when we have ſpent our time idly, perhaps ſcandalouſly, and offenſively, and ſent others to hell by our example. We muſt ſerve God in our generation, in our life.

Danger of deferring Gods ſervice.

Thou that liveſt prophanely day after day, when doſt thou meane to ſerve God? at the houre of death? did *David* ſerve God when he

he was to die only? No, *he ſerved God in his generation, and then fell aſleep.* Alas, why do we put off? there is no ſowing after this life; then is the time of reaping; and why wilt thou deferre the time of ſowing till thou come to reap? It is a time to reap the comforts of religion at the houre of death; ſhall we defer to ſerve Gods will till we come to make our own will? and oft times it is forced what wee do then. No, wee muſt ſerve God all our time: *David ſerved God all his generation.* To do a few good works at our death only; it is a ſwiniſh doing good: the ſwine will do good when he is dead; then there is profit of his fleſh, though all his life hee were noyſome. Thoſe men that put off thus, they are rather ſwine than men; beaſtly men. God ſeldome accepts the good they do then, and it is a forced good; if they were not to die then, no good at all would be done: that they do, is becauſe they can keep it no longer. It ſhewes they have no grace nor faith at all: for if there had beene faith to depend upon God, they would have done good before; but they think, I may come to miſery my ſelfe, and I know not what diſtruſtfull baſe thoughts; therefore they will do no good in their life-time. But wee muſt ſerve God in our generation, if wee will be ſaved. Theſe things are of ſome uſe, and wee ſhould not forget them; but I come to the ſervice it ſelfe, which I ſhall a little more ſtand upon.

David

David ſerved the will of God.

HEre is conſiderable, as I told you, theſe three things.

The object whom he ſerved, *God.*

The rule by which hee ſerved him, *his will:* and then:

The ſervice it ſelfe: for to know *the will of God*, and not to ſerve him, it is to no purpoſe; all muſt go together, wee muſt ſerve *the will of God*; as wee ſee here *David* did.

Doct. God the object of our ſervice.

For the firſt; It is a knowne truth, that God is the maine object of all our ſervice. Indeed we ſerve men: for in love (which is a very buſie grace) we muſt ſerve one another in good works, but the love of God muſt ſet all on work, and all muſt bee done in obedience to him. God is the object that muſt terminate all our ſervice to men; whatſoever duty wee do, we muſt do it as to God. If we ſerve men; (if we be Chriſtians) it muſt be with reference to God, becauſe hee commands us, and that we may honour God. We can do no good to him; what doth he care for our goods? but he hath ſubſtituted men in his place, he hath appointed ſuch and ſuch men in our generation to do good unto: & he accounts what we do to them for his ſake, as done to him. God is the object of our ſervice: God in Chriſt as our Father.

Pſal. 16.

God,

God, as God, without Christ a Mediator, ought to bee ſerved for our very Creation; if we were to go to Hell when wee had done; or ſhould vaniſh to nothing, with the beaſts: for our very ſubordination, and ſubjection to God as creatures, implies ſervice. He is the object of ſervice, as being our Maker, having given us a being, having given us reaſon to ſerve him. But now God conſidered as a Father in Chriſt, in the Covenant of grace, wee ought to ſerve him in a higher regard; not as creatures the Creator only, and as ſervants their Lord: but as a gracious Father. So God the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt, and Chriſt Mediator God-man, are the object of our ſervice, the whole adæquate, fit object: we muſt not go beyond them: for whatſoever elſe wee do, it muſt be in reference to them. I will not dwell upon the point; it is a foundation to that I am to ſpeak of.

God as Creator to be ſerved.

The next thing is the rule of his ſervice, *he ſerved the will of God.*

The will of God.

THe word ſignifieth *Counſell*, and it is better tranſlated *Counſell*, than *will*; becauſe it is more emphaticall: Gods will is his Counſell, not in regard of imperfection in Counſell; for Counſell implies ſomewhat imperfect; as deliberation, and conſultation; God ſees all at once, he doth not deliberate: but

Will of God, Counſell, why?

but in regard of that which is eminent in Counsell; what is that? Wisdome; *by Counsell thou shalt bee established*: so whatsoever is Gods will, that is Counsell; it is wise; it is weighed, it is as gold seven times tried. Therefore wee should stoup to whatsoever is Gods will; either in his word, or in events; his *will* is *Counsell*, hee is wise, hee is not rash. A patterne to all those that would be like God, to do all by *Counsell*, and not by *will*. Those that are put to their will, if there bee not answerable wisdome to guyde it, to what mischiefe do they plunge themselves and others?

Service what.

God must be served according to his *Counsell*, or *will*, as hee hath discovered himselfe in his word: for service is nothing but an action done with an eye to the will of another; for if a man doth an action that one would have him do; if hee do it not with respect to his command, it is no obedience, nor service: he that hath not some care in the act, it is no obedience. As the Civill Law saith, *infringit obedientiam, &c.* it breaks from the nature of obedience, that hath no cause for it; he must know his reason: at the least there is the command of the superiour must bee a reason, and ground for what hee doth in all his obedience and service. Therefore there is a like necessity of the word of God, as of his service: for what Master will bee served according to the will of his servant? why doth the Scripture mislike

mislike will-worship; worship that is according to our owne will? because therein wee make our selves God, we serve our selves, and not God. Wee must not serve God, as wee would bee loath to be served our selves; wee would be loath to have a servant complement with cap, and knee, and then do as he list himselfe: and so for us to come, and complement with God, to heare his word, as if wee would be directed by him: to kneele, and pray to him for fashion, and then all our life after to do as we list. It is a delusion to say we serve God, unlesse we serve him according to his *will*.

will worship. why forbidden?

Therefore there must be a rule of our service, and that rule is the written word of God. There was a time when the word of God was not written; and then God discovered his *will* by dreames, and visions, and many other wayes: but when the world was enlarged, and mankind spread further, traditions from hand to hand was not a fit means, and way to deliver truths: because it was subject to corruption. God therefore would deliver his *will* (how he would be served) in writing: and God sanctified this course, and gave credit to it, by his owne example, writing his owne Law with his own finger. The ten Commandements were written by God himselfe. God was the first Preacher, and the first writer; he was the first Preacher, he preached the Gospell to *Adam* in Paradice: and the

Gods written word the rule of our service.

Heb. 1.

the first writer, the tenne Commandements being written by God himselfe. Now, wee have the written word of God to be our rule (how God must be served) an exact, and perfect rule. I will not speak by way of controversie: I (hope we are grounded well enough) but by way of direction for a godly life. Gods Will is a sufficient rule.

What is requisite in a Rule?

Properties of a Rule, appliable to the word of God.

1. *Open, manifest.*

First, a rule must be cleere, and open, that it may bee made use of, by those that are to bee regulated by it: therefore we say, The secret will of God can be no rule, because it is secret. That which is a rule must bee manifest and open: therefore the revealed will of God that every one may see, that is our rule. Wee may crosse Gods secret will and do well; and wee may serve it, and yet do ill. A Father may pray for his childs life, and may crosse the secret will of God, and yet doth well; God allowes bowels in Fathers. A wicked man may do according to Gods secret will, and yet sin: therefore that was not the rule of *Davids* service, nor cannot be of ours. *Secret things belong to God: but revealed things to us and our children*, saith blessed *Moses*. The will of God as it is discovered must be the rule of our actions: A rule must be open, or else it is no rule.

Secret will of God, no rule, why?

2. *Infallible.*

Againe, the rule by which we must lead our lives it must bee infallible, not subject to error; for then it cannot be the rule of our service.

vice. The Word of God is an infallible rule, it cannot deceive, becauſe it is the Word of God: men wrote it indeed; but it was God that dictated it: the finger writes, but the head dictates: holy men wrote it according as they were guided be the holy Ghoſt. The will of any man cannot be the rule of any mans ſervice, further than it is agreeable to the firſt rule, why? becauſe it is ſubject to errour, and miſtake. That which muſt be the conſtant rule of a mans life, it muſt not be as popiſh traditions and the like; it muſt be infallible: now the word of God is ſo, it is infallible: a man may erre, and be a man, and a good man too: but God cannot erre, and be God; the word of God cannot bee falſe and bee the word of God, therefore it is an infallible rule.

The Grand lie in the Church of Rome.

When this is applied to any creature, it is a Grand lie, and the foundation of miſery in that Church: this is the firſt lie in the Church of *Rome*; That the Church conſiſting of a company of men cannot erre: what a horrible abſurdity is this, to make the will of man the rule: that the Church cannot erre, that Popery cannot erre? though they erre egregiouſly; they account rebellion ſervice; and make traitors merit, &c.

But are our Tenents ſubject to ſuch groſſe things? No, we make the rule of obedience the infallible word of God, that cannot erre. To attribute that of that which cannot erre, to that which can erre, it is a horrible abſurdity:

ditie: but I will not enter into controversies.

3. *In extent.* Againe, that which is a rule must be perfect in commensuration, in measure: it must be of equall extent to all things that are to bee ruled. Now the things that are to be ruled, is our whole carriage, and conversation: therefore that that is the rule for a man, it must rule his thoughts, his speeches, and actions: so the word of God, it rules the whole carriage of a man. There is a proportion between the rule, and all things that are to bee ruled by it; all things fall under the word of God to bee directed, and ruled by it: It gives direction to our thoughts, to our speeches, to our actions, in our callings; it gives direction to Magistrates, to Ministers, to Masters, to Servants, to all estates, and conditions, in life, in death. It is exceeding large as *David* saith, *All things come to an end, but thy Commandements are exceeding large.* It is a rule that extends to all things that are to bee ruled whatsoever: no other rule but Gods will doth so: for mens lawes, they have nothing to do with thoughts: thought is free for them.

4. *Authenticall.* Againe, a rule must bee authenticall; what is that? It must be credited for it selfe, it must have authority of, and for it selfe, and not depend upon another (if it bee the first rule;) Indeed there be subordinate rules, there is a rule ruled, and a rule ruling mens lawes; the Magistrates will, it is a rule ruled by a higher rule:

and

and as long as it ſo, it is a good rule; but there muſt bee a rule ruling, above all ſubordinate rules whatſoever; what is that? The word of God; it hath authority from it ſelfe, not borrowed of men: it is a rule that rules all, & is ruled of none others rule: but by this rule; this is a rule, ruling the very rulers of the world. No mans will is a law further than it is ſquared by this law of lawes. It is an inflexible rule, it cannot bee bent to mens purpoſes; man would bring Gods will to his will; but it is the meaſure that meaſures all, and is meaſured by none: for we muſt not judge the word, the word muſt judge us. You have ſome preſumptuous perſons that will judge, and murmure at the word, but the word will bee too good for them, and judge them. Hee that judgeth the law, and gives ſentence on the law, ſhewes himſelf a foole, the law muſt judge him: much more the law of God; therefore it is authenticall. Theſe are the maine properties of that that muſt be a rule to judge our lives by. Now the word of God, is both knowne; and is not ſubject to errour any kind of way: and it is equall to all things that may fall under it; and it is authenticall, of credit for it ſelfe (let men ſay what they will,) it muſt rule, and not be ruled. Therefore *David* when hee ordered his courſe of life by this will of God, he deſerved this commendation, that *in his generation he ſerved the will of God.*

5. *Inflexible.*

There bee ſubordinate rules in their kind;

as the Law of Nature, and the Lawes of men, direct in things of this life, to doe them in that manner, according to the rule: a civill Law for civill actions: mens Lawes for mens actions: but when we doe any thing holily, we must have direction from Gods Law, and that must put the respect of service to God upon our actions. For howsoever wee doe things civilly by the Civill Law; and doe things comely by the Law of Nature: Nature teacheth us to carry ourselves in a *decoram*, to give every man his due: but it is not a service of God, except it be directed by the rule of God, a man cannot serve God without a higher rule than man can give.

How to apply the rule in particular actions.

But you will say, how shall wee apply, and make use of this rule in particular actions; the Word is but short, but actions are infinite; the Word of God directs me not to this, or that action; and saith, you shall doe this, or that in particular; but gives generall rules: how shall we come to carrie our selves in particular actions? here is the skill: for a rule is not to hang up, a measure is not to bee cast aside, but to be applied; a rule is a thing in relation to a thing ruled, and a measure to things measured; and if we doe not apply it, we lose the use of it. How shall we know how to serve the Will of God in every particular action?

1 *Outward helps.*

Besides the generall Word of God, we have some outward helpes, and some inward. The outward helpes are:

First,

First the Miniſtery, that is one maine outward help; and what is the Miniſtery for, but to digup the treaſure, the Mynd of God, to lay open the Will of God in particular; to branch out, and lay open, and anatomize the duties of ſuch, and ſuch callings, by their Miniſteriall gifts, which God hath given his ſervants in a competent meaſure, to give particular directions? They have their callings for this end, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon; they have the tongue of the learned, God hath not ſet up this calling for naught, therefore, as we goe to the learned in the Law, in doubts in that kind: ſo in particular doubts, why doe we not make uſe of thoſe that ſtudy that way? if it be in ſuch a caſe, as perhaps we have no light in our ſelves. It is one end of their calling, becauſe perhaps our callings are ſuch, as that we cannot ſtudie particulars our ſelves, therefore God hath ſanctified that calling, that wee might have the uſe of it: that is one.

1 *The Miniſtery.*

Another outward helpe for particulars; it is communion with good people, thoſe that are led with the ſpirit of God: for wee muſt know, that God oft times laies up the practiſe of one man in the breaſt of another: becauſe he would knit man to man. Weare oft times at a loſſe, the beſt of us all, in particular directions what to doe: ſometimes a meaner man (in ſome things) than our ſelves, can give better directions in particular than our ſelves; ſhall we ſtorme, and ſwell at this? no; it is Gods

2 *Communion with good people*

Gods wisdome that one man should carrie that which is for the speciall use of another: that wee might take counsell, and aske advise one of another. *A wise man ordereth his doings by Counsell*, saith the Wiseman: and oft times he that takes advise of himselfe, hath a foole to his Counsellour; and he beshrewes himselfe that he would not take the benefit of another mans advice: therefore, besides the publique Ministerie, this is one helpe, our Christian friends, and acquaintance; and they are reserved for such a time: A friend is made for adversity, for ill times, in perplexed, and doubtfull cases: this is to make use, and benefit of others.

3. *Lawes of men.*

Againe, the Lawes of men; what are the Lawes, if they bee good, but particular determinations of the Will of God. We ought to have reverent conceits of the Lawes: for they doe but bring Gods generalls to particulars, if they bee good Lawes: if they have not their derivation from Gods Lawes, they are naught; but if they backe that in any thing, they are nothing but a particular determining of the generall rules in Gods Word, to give every man his due, &c. Therefore in many cases we may know what the Will of God is, by the good Lawes of the kingdome, which bind the Conscience to obedience. There is no disobedience to mens Lawes, but where there is disobedience to Gods Lawes first, which hath stablished mens Lawes.

And

And then in some particulars (when it doth not appeare what wee should doe) the example of good people, of the wisest, and best in the ranke, and place where wee live, till wee know the contrary, the best way is to rest in their judgment, to follow the advice of others, the direction of friends, or the Lawes and customes; and not to be refractary, and opposite, except there be reason to the contrary: for mans spirit is a divine thing, it must alway be led with some reason: but with this reservation, a man may keep to others, till it appeare otherwise, till hee see other light, and direction, to take this course. This is the disposition that should bee in every peaceable man. These bee some outward helpes to know the Will of God in particular actions.

4. *Example of good people.*

The inward helps to know what Gods Will in particular is, together with the Word of God unfolded.

2. *Inward helper.*

The Spirit of God, which is as a voyce behind us, saying, *This is the way, walke in it. Isa.* 30. Wherefore serves the blessed Spirit, but to be a Counsellour? as *Isa.* 9. 7. Christ, he is the blessed Counsellour, how comes he to be so? not immediatly by himselfe, but by his Spirit. All things he doth to his Church, is by his Spirit: he fills his Church with his Spirit. Now the children of God having this Spirit of Counsell to advise them in particulars, they are led with the Spirit. This is one inward help, and a maine one. And surely, if

1. *The Spirit of God.* Isa. 30. Isa. 9. 7.

we would give way to the blessed guidance of Gods Spirit, and not grieve, and quench, and resist the Spirit; the Spirit of God would be readie to direct us upon all occasions, wee should be guided in particular actions with a better Spirit than our owne. And this Spirit we may have by prayer, God will give the Spirit to them that beg him, *Luk.* 11.

Luke 11.

2 *Particular grace Prudence.*

Then another inward helpe, is particular grace, which God gives to his children. Particular prudence, to speake words, and to doe actions in season, that every thing may bee beautifull in its time. There is Sapience, Wisedome, and Prudence: *I wisedome dwell with Prudence.* It is the wisedome of a man, to understand his way, what to doe in particular, or what not to doe. It is Prudence, or discretion to discerne of differences: now that grace of God is in some measure given to all his children: he makes them wise to understand their owne way. They are not so wise perhaps for other things, it is not their way. God lets some men goe with a lesse measure of discretion to heaven than others; because he hath lesse worke for them to doe: but every man hath as much as will bring him to heaven; the lesse he hath himselfe, the more hee shall have of others. Some men are excellent in gifts of Wisedome, they can tell you generalls out of the Booke of God excellent well: but come to directions in particular, and you shall have meaner men of better discreti-

on

on than they. Either we have it our selves, or else God will associate us, and by his providence cast us upon other acquaintance, that have a greater measure of this grace, that hee will have us acquainted with. God gives every one of his a Spirit, to discerne what to speake, how to advise, how to comfort, what to doe. And the meanest Christian is more in this for religious actions, than the greatest man in the world, that hath not the Spirit of God: for hee can tell in particular, how to beare afflictions, and how to enjoy prosperity, because the Spirit directs him what to doe.

3 Conscience.

Againe, God hath put into every man a Conscience, wherefore serves conscience, but especially to direct in particulars? There is a faculty of the soule, that wee call a Treasurie; a preserving faculty, that is to lay up generall rules out of the Word of God, and directions out of good bookes, and from the counsell of other men: it is a faculty to treasure up rules, therfore it hath the name of preserving: but there is a conscience under this, that being sanctified by the Spirit of God, & being directed in generall by the word of God, it directs in particular. Conscience tels us, this in particular you ought to doe; this you have done: in this particular you have done well, in this you have done ill: so conscience is put in us to check, or direct us in particular. It is Gods Vicar in every man, together with the Spirit: Conscience, together with the Spirit is a great help

helpe to know Gods Will in particulars. If men would not bee too bold with Conſcience, Conſcience (together with Gods Spirit) would be faithfull to them. Conſcience may ſay as *Reuben* ſaid to his brethren, when they were in miſerie; *Did not I tell you, doe no hurt to the lad?* deale not ſo hardly with *Ioſeph* as to caſt him into the pit? ſo many men do many things amiſſe, Conſcience may ſay; did not I tell you this before, it was naught, and yet you would needs doe it? yes certainly: and when Conſcience is not hearkned unto as a director, it will ſcourge as a Iudge. It hath many offices; and it is good to keepe this Conſcience in its office, to let Conſcience doe its full duty, let Conſcience direct us to the full. Certainly, if wee would hearken to this Vice-gerent in our hearts; (this little-god, that God hath placed there (in mercie) to guide our lives in particular) it would be better with us than it is, wee ſhould end our dayes with more comfort, and give a better reckoning than we can.

4. *Experience.*

Againe, experience may bee added as another helpe. Experience is a great helpe in particulars: for indeed generalls are raiſed out of experiments in particular. Therefore, thoſe that are wiſe Polititians, States-men, they are not ſo out of bookes altogether; but men of experience, that can ſay, ſuch a caſe hath beene ſo at ſuch a time: ſo that out of obſervation, and particular experience, they are able to ſay

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(upon the like caſe) it ſhould bee now at this time thus, and thus. If therefore wee would treaſure up experience, it would bee a good helpe to know what is to bee done in particulars: to conſider how it hath beene in former time, and conſider the experience of others; you ſee then what the rule of our ſervice is, Gods Will: with theſe helpes ſubordinate to it, how to direct our ſelves in particular actions to ſerve the Will of God: So much for that point.

Hee ſerved.

NOw I come to the act of Service, God muſt bee *ſerved* according to his owne Will: wee muſt ſearch, and trie what is the good, and holy, and acceptable Will of God *Rom.* 12. I have ſhewed how we may ſearch in particular what the good, and acceptable Will of God is: Now when this is diſcovered, the next thing is to *ſerve* God in the knowledge of his Will: for all the bleſſings are annexed to *ſervice*, and not to knowledge. If yee know this Will; is there all? no; happy are yee if yee doe it. If we know the rule and doe it, we are happy. What if wee doe it not? *Hee that knowes his Maſters will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* It will but aggravate our damnation, to know the rule, to have directions what to doe, and not to doe them. Then the rule that we have, hath another uſe: if

8.

The Act, he ſerved God.

Rom. 12.

To know Gods will, and not doe it, aggravates our damnation.

if we use it not for direction in what wee doe, it wil be brought against us at the day of judgment, as a direction for God to damne us by: this you knew, this counsell you had, these motions of the Spirit you had; this, Conscience told you; this, the Ministery, and your friends told you; notwithstanding you crossed, and thwarted all; when it is not a direction for us to obedience, it will bee a direction for God to give sentence. Therefore let us make conscience, first to know the will of God, (which is the rule of all our actions) by all the meanes we can, and then to give *service* to it. *David served the will of God:* his life was not unfruitfully, and wickedly spent; but *he served* the Counsell of God that had planted, and placed him there in the world for that purpose. Why hath God planted us here, in the Paradise of the Church? that we should not bee barren trees; or bring forth ill fruit: but that wee should *serve* him, and bee fruitfull in our place s

Cause of the fall of Angels.

This word *service*, is a harsh word, and such a thing as proud spirits could never digest. Why did the Divells fall? they would be in a state independent, and not under others: they would have their owne courses; and therefore the Scripture saith, *they kept not their owne standing*. God set them in one course: and they swelled and would not keep it. The particular is not set downe in Scripture: but *they kept not their owne standing*. Neither the Divel,

Divell, who is a proud creature, nor men led with the ſpirit of the Divell, can indure ſervice: every man would be a God to himſelfe, to be guyded by his owne lewd will, and luſts, (and God knowes) they are blind guides; and we ſhall know it to our coſt, if wee have not a better guide; when the will of God is revealed therefore, wee muſt have a care to ſerve it.

Now, to *ſerve*, implies two things eſpecially, an action, and a reference of that action to the will of another, that is *ſervice* (as I ſaid before) to do a thing, and to do in obedience: for if a man do never ſo many things, if it be not in obedience to the will of another, it is no *ſervice*, he ſerves himſelfe: ſo to *ſerve* God is, when we know the will of God, to do accordingly, and to do it becauſe it is the will of God; then it is *ſervice*: or elſe it is a work indeed done, but no *ſervice*, or obedience. *To ſerve, what?*

All obedience is with looking to the will, and pleaſure of another, that hath authority to direct us: and then we *ſerve* the revealed will of God, when the whole inward and outward man is faſhioned, and framed to that: when there is a meaſuring of both together: as when wee obey the directions, when wee tremble at the threatnings, when wee imitate the examples of holy writ, when we are raiſed up with the comforts; when anſwerable to every divine truth, there is an anſwerable diſpoſition of

of ſoule: when there is a ſweet harmony betweene Gods truth, and our inward, and outward man. Rom. 6. *We muſt be caſt into the mold of the word:* as a thing when it is molded in another frame, it carries the print of the frame or mold; ſo wee *ſerve* the will, and word of God, when we are molded anſwerable to that will.

Rom. 6.

Service of God.

Now more particularly, this *ſervice* of the will of God; It is either immediate inward *ſervice* of the will of God; or outward ſervice.

1. Inward.

Inward *ſervice*, is the obedience of the firſt Commandement, when upon the konwledge of God, wee ſet him up in our ſoules, and cleave to him in our affections, of truſt, and joy, and love, and delight, to give him the ſupremacie of all theſe; then we ſerve him with inward worwip, and *ſervice*; and this indeed is to ſet the Crowne upon Gods head, and to make him King, and God in our hearts; he muſt have the prime of our inward *ſervice*: when we love God above all, and feare him above all, and delight in him above all, & cleave to him when all things elſe faile us, this is the immediate *ſervice* of God in our hearts, when wee give God his owne in our hearts. Hence comes all other *ſervice* whatſoever: or elſe it is but the eye-ſervice that is not enlivened with the inward worſhip of God.

Now, beſides this inward, there is a *ſervice* of God that comes from this inward *ſervice*, which is, of the outward man, that is, when

wee

we pray to God, and that requires our words, when we praise God in thanksgiving, when we come to heare the word, and to receive the Sacrament; and so all outward holy actions are the *service* of God, and are drawne from the inward immediate worship of God that I spake of before.

3. *Service in obeying the second Table.*

Besides these (which come more immediatly from a sanctified spirit) there is a *service* of God, that is the obedience of the second Table, when we do good to men with an eye to serve God as we say; there is an elicite proper *service* of God, & a cõmanded *service* of God, *cultus imperatus*. All duties to men are a *service* of God, when wee do them as commanded of God, as, because I love God, therfore I honour my parents, and Magistrates, and therfore I will not commit adultery, as *Ioseph, shall I do this and offend God?* So the Scripture alleageth reasons out of the first Table, when wee are tempted to sinnes against the second Table: and then the duties of the second Table are a worship, and *service* of God, when they are commanded by the first. And this is the difference betweene a meere formall man, and a Christian in his outward performances; a Civil man is altogether for the second Table: but hee hath not his rise from the first; hee gives every man his due, &c. but it is not in obedience to God, because God hath commanded him to do it: but because he sees it is a deformed thing to bee unjust, out of the light

Difference betweene a formall man and a Christian.

light of nature) hee condemnes the sinne, but not out of religious respects, it is not a *service* of God all this while. I, but when it is from love to God, when that great command (*thou shalt love God above all*) sets him upon this, then all the duties hee performes to man are a *service* of the will of God: for God commands them. Even the baseſt works are a *service* of God, when they are done in obedience to God, as Saint *Paul* tels them in *Colloſ.* 3. and *Epheſ.* 6. the poore servant *serves the Lord Christ*; when a poore servant is at his work, imployed in the buſineſſe of man, poore common things; yet hee ſerves the Lord all the while: For God hath ſet him in that calling, and he doth the ſecond Table in obedience to the firſt; and he *ſerves* men, thoſe that are his governors with an eye to the great Governour, and Maſter that is above all, that will reward them for their poore ſervice, however their Maſter reward them, *Epheſ.* 6. This is to *ſerve* the will of God then, to yeeld to him the immediate *ſervice* of the ſoule, and the outward expreſſions of it, and to go thorow all other duties as they ſpring from the firſt: then wee are molded (as I ſaid before) anſwerable to the word of God.

Colloſ. 3. Epheſ. 6.

Epheſ. 6.

To apply this to our bleſſed man *David*, and then to make uſe of it to our ſelves.

Application to David, *he ſerved God.*

Thus did *David ſerve* the will of God in his time: for you may ſee what he was; hee is anatomiſed, and laid open to our eyes in the Pſalmes,

Psalmes, you may see his care of *serving* God in his owne writings. See how he stayed to God in his affections in *Psal.* 18. how he loved God, and joyed in God, and in the word of God, above all things in the world; hee esteemed the light of *Gods countenance more than corne, or wine, or oyle*, *Psal.* 4. I give but a touch to shew how this description is true of this blessed man, *that he served the will of God.*

1. *In the inward man.* Psal. 18.

Psal. 4.

And for the expression of it in praise, and prayer, hee was *a man after Gods owne heart*, especially in this, he was ready upon all occasions to blesse, and praise God; hee kept his communion with God, as we see, though hee were a King, yet his maine care was to *serve* God, as we see in *Psal.* 1. *hee meditated in the word of God day and night.* What time had he to rule his Kingdome then? The meaning is, that all the spare time that hee had, it was to think of God, to looke to the rule, the word of God, how to guide his life.

2. *Outward.*

Psal. 1.

And for his outward calling (there is a double calling wherein wee *serve* God as Christians, our generall, and our particular calling, wherein wee are to deale with men) what an excellent man was hee! *hee served the will of God*, as a Governour of a family, wee see in *Psal.* 101. how he carried himselfe in the middest of his house, to all his servants, a lyer should not abide in his house. You have a direction there how to guid your families, you see how hee *served* the Will of God as a governour;

3. *For the second table.*

Psal. 101.

vernour; yet there was a fault in him in that respect, hee was too indulgent to *Absolon*, and *Adoniah*. A man may be a good man, and yet be too blame in some particulars: but when his heart is right, God pardons the rest.

As a King.

You see how he carried himselfe as a King, he was an excellent King, the delight of Israel: hee carried himselfe every way as a King should doe: hee tempered mercie, and judgement together: *I will sing of mercie, and judgement:* so he did in his whole carriage sweetly temper mercie, and justice, he dispenced these two. And as a King must not only *serve* God himselfe; but to make others *serve* God: so his care was to stablish the worship of God, as you find in the storie. *David*, when he saw all in peace and quiet, then he begins to take care for the Arke, 1 *Chron.* 17. *I dwell in a house of Cedar: but the Arke of the Lord remaines under curtaines*: therfore hee tooke a course for that. So governours should doe, when God hath setled them in their government quietly, to begin to thinke of Gods house: for they rule not well, they *serve* not the Will of God, except, besides their owne *service*, they call others to *serve* him. A Magistrate must be the keeper of both Tables himselfe, and cause others to doe it, he must lay downe his crowne at the feet of Christ, as it is in *Isay*. Thus *David* was a nursing father to the Church of God, hee served God in his particular calling.

1 Chron. 17.

Now

Now (to make use of another division) the Will of God it is either in things to be done, or to be suffred, and obedience answerable to that is either active, or passive; as *David served* God in doing, so hee yeelded obedience, and *served* the Will of God in his passive obedience: wherein hee did deny himselfe exceedingly, as much as ever man did, next to Christ; you see how he denied himselfe in his carriage toward *Saul*, in matter of revenge, how he overcame himselfe, because hee knew that revenge was Gods, and that God was his, and therefore would right him well enough; and in *Shimei*, *God hath bid him raile*; hee would not revenge: and other notable examples wee have, how he submitted to Gods Will, as in 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. when hee was in extremitie, hee encouraged himselfe in the Lord his God; there he staied himselfe in extremity; and in 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. there is a notable place how hee submitted himselfe to God. *The King said, Carry backe the Arke of God, if I have found favour in the eyes of God he will bring me again; but if God say thus, I have no delight in him; behold here I am, let him doe as seemes good to him.* Here was a resignation of himselfe to the will of himselfe in *serving* of him: so in *Psal.* 39. *I held my tongue Lord; because thou didest it.* Thus you see how he *served* the will of God, in the inward *service* of God, and in the outward to God, and man; in both callings, as a good man, and a good governour, in his fami-

In suffering.

1 Sam. 30. 6.

2 Sam. 15. 25.

Ps. 39.

ly every way he *ſerved* the Will of God.

Uſe. And wherefore is all this? Here is a patterne for us that we ſhould *ſerve* the Will of God: to *ſerve* the Will of God immediatly, to labour to bring our hearts to truſt in him, to feare him above all, to delight in him above all; and to expreſſe it in our outward *ſervice* of him, and in doing duties to men from inward reſpect to God; in conſcience of our dutie, to ſerve God when we ſerve men: to carry our ſelves in our generall calling, as Chriſtians, and in our particular place, not only to be good men; but good in our callings; good Students, good Lawyers, &c. Let us ſhew our Religion there, as *David* did: this is to *ſerve* the Will of God. That is not Religion that is left behind in the Church: as *Lactantius* ſaith, that is no Religion that wee leave behind, when wee come to the Church doore: but that is Religion, when wee learne our dutie here, and carry it in our breaſts to practiſe it every day in the weeke, when wee ſhew it in our places; that is the *ſervice* of God. Therefore let this holy man bee an example to us; wherefore are theſe particular things recorded of him in the Scriptures, but that we ſhould transforme our ſelves to this bleſſed patterne.

To imitate David.

Lactantius.

The whole life of a Chriſtian wee ſee is a *ſervice* of God: there is nothing that we doe but it may be a *ſervice* of God; no, not our particular recreations, if wee uſe them as wee

ſhould; as whettings to bee fitter for our callings, and enjoy them as liberties with thankfulneſſe to God that allowes us theſe liberties to refreſh our ſelves. There is no paſſage of a mans life, but it may have the reſpect of a ſervice of God: it is not the matter, or ſtuffe, but the ſtamp that makes the coyn: ſo it is not the worke, but the ſtamp that makes it a *ſervice*, when we doe it with an eye to God. Let the King ſet a ſtamp but upon braſſe, upon a token, yet it will goe for current, if it have the Kings authority, and ſtamp upon it: let it be but an action of our callings, ſuppoſe to give counſell in our ſtudies, or pleading of the Law, &c. if it have Gods ſtamp upon it, if there be Prayer upon it to bleſſe it, and it bee done in obedience to God, and with juſtice; not againſt the rules of Piety, and Charity, (and as farre as it may diſpleaſe God to balk, and avoid all temptations in our callings out of Religious reſpects) it is a *ſervice* of God: our whole life not only in the Church, but in our particular places may bee a *ſervice* of God; as it is ſaid, here *David ſerved* God. *Similie.*

Oh, if wee could thinke of this whereſoever wee are, wee would take no liberty to offend God in any thing! wee would not thruſt Religion into a corner, into a narrow roome, and limit it to ſome dayes, and times, and actions, and places; and then take liberty to defraud, and diſſemble; to abuſe our ſelves

this way, and that way; is this to *serve* God? to *serve* God is to carry our selves as the children of God whereſoever we are: ſo that our whole life is a *ſervice* of God.

A Chriſtian is no Libertine, no man of freedome, hee is a ſervant. Indeed wee have changed our Maſter: wee are ſet at libertie from the ſlaverie of ſinne and Sathan; but it is not that wee ſhould doe nothing; to bee Belialls, without yoake: but it is to *ſerve* God, we are taken from the *ſervice* of Sathan to be the Lords free-men, and indeed it is to that end, we are delivered that wee might *ſerve* God; therefore all the actions of our life ſhould be a *ſervice* to God.

Luke 1.

Queſt. To make this a little clearer: how can this bee (will ſome man thinke) that every common action ſhould bee a *ſervice* of God?

Anſw. How common actions may be a ſervice of God. I will make it cleare by an inſtance; the beaſts, and other creatures, and wee, have common actions; ſuch as wee doe in common, as to eat, and to drinke, and to move: the beaſt doth this, and man doth it; when a man doth them, they are reaſonable actions, becauſe they are guided with reaſon, and moderated by reaſon: but when the beaſt doth them, they are the actions of a beaſt; becauſe hee hath no better faculty to guide him. So common actions, they are not a *ſervice* of God, as they come from common men, that have not graee, and the Spirit of God in their hearts: they

are meere buying, and selling, and going about the actions of their callings, as the actions of a beast are the actions of a beast. But let a Christian come to doe them, he hath a higher life, and a higher spirit, that makes them spirituall actions that are common in themselves; hee raiseth them up to a higher order, and ranke. Therfore a Christian *serveth* God in all that hee doth, hee hath an eye to God: that which another man doth with no eye to God, but meerely in civill respects. Wee say of policie: it is an ancient observation, which is good, and very fit. The knowledge of a common wealth; it is a building knowledge, a commanding knowledge: for though a States-man doth not build, hee doth not buy and sell, and commerce: but hee useth all other trades for the good of the State. It is a knowledge commanding all other inferiour Arts, and Trades (in a common wealth) to the last end: they should all bee serviceable to the common-wealth, and if they bee not, away with them. So Religion, and the knowledge of Divine things, it is a commanding knowledge, it commands all other *services* in our callings, &c. It doth not teach a man what he shall doe in particular in his calling: but it teacheth him how to direct that calling to *serve* God, to bee advantageous, and helpfull to his generall calling: to further him to heaven, to make every thing reductive to his last end, which hee sets before him, that is, to honour,

nour, and serve God in all things, to whom, hee desires to approve himselfe in life, and death: hee hath a principle, the holy Ghost in him, and he labours to reduce every thing to the maine end, oh that wee were in this temper.

To serve God in our sufferings.

And as wee must labour to imitate holy *David* in doing: so likewise in suffering. We must bee carefull that nothing of Gods displease us, as we are carefull (for our selves) that nothing of ours displease God. In doing, we ought to be carefull that nothing of ours displease God: in suffering, that nothing of Gods dealing displease us: for there is rebellion in both, in passive obedience, as well as active. There is rebellion when wee murmure, and will not bee as God will have us, as if we were wiser than he, to appoint our owne condition: whereas wee should resigne our selves as *David, here I am, let the Lord do as it pleaseth him*, and as they said in the *Acts*; *The will of the Lord be done*: and as we pray in the Lords prayer, *Thy will be done*, insinuating, not our owne. We must bee content to stoup in our sufferings obediently to God, because he is *righteous in all his wayes*, and *holy in all his works*; in all the courses he takes with us, we should bee ready to justifie God in all things

David *served God.*

Now, how did hee *serve* God, for the manner of his *service*? The manner of his *service* was as it should bee, and so he was exemplary

to

to us all in that, amongst others, his *service* was?

First, universall, to God, and to men every way.

1. *Universall.*

Secondly, it was uniforme; hee was good in all conditions; a good Sheepheard, a good King, he was good in his family, &c. So the *service* of the children and servants of God, it must be uniforme in all estates: *to know how to want, and how to abound, &c.*

2. *Uniforme.*

And then his *service* was cheerefull; wee see how oft hee rouseth up himselfe in the Psalmes, *awake my Harp and Lute, &c.*

3. *Cheerfull.*

And lastly his *service* was sincere. It was to God: you may know his sincerity by this; he cared not for scoffings, he practised duties that were scorned at. That is, an evidence of sincerity, when in ill times, the children of God stand to God, and Religion. When *Micholl* mocked him, saith he, I will be yet more vile for God. When God may have glory, and Religion defence, for men to stand for God in ill times it is a signe of sincerity; an hipocrite will never do so. *David* did at all times, *in his Generation.*

4. *Sincere.*
Signes of sincerity.
1. *To practise scorned duties.*

And then it was a signe of sincerity, that he would appeale to God: *Trie me Lord, if there be any way of wickednesse in me:* when a soule can go to God, and say, Lord, if there by any way of wickednesse in me, any secret lurking corruption in mee (that may endanger the state of my soule) that I know not of, discover

2. *To appeale to God.*

ver it to me; that is a signe that a man is in league with no sin: but his *service* is sincere.

3. Comfort.

A man that is not sincere, hath no comfort: so much sincerity, so much comfort. If a man do not things to God in sincerity, all is lost to God, a man may have commendations of the world, as the Pharises had (which is nothing but a kind of curse) *you have your reward*, that is, you have it here, and shall lose it hereafter. So much concerning the life of *David*, in those words, *David in his Generation served the Counsell, or Will of God.* Now (to make a perfect discourse of it) wee will speak something of his end.

He fell a sleep, and was gathered to his Fathers, and saw Corruption.

HE *fell asleep*, that is, he died: for sleep in Scripture, it is a middle phrase, appliable to good, and bad: for wicked men (in Scripture) are said to sleep, and good men are said to sleep. Only the difference is, as the persons are: for the sleep of wicked men, it is like the sleep of a malefactor before his execution, that is oft-times tripped in his sleep: or like the sleep of a man in sickness, or in a mad fit, his sleep doth but concoct the malignant humour, and after he wakes, he rageth three times more than he did before. So the sleep, the death of a carnall wicked man, it is but a preparation to his execution: it is

Difference in the death of godly and wicked.

Simile.

but

but the sleep of a distempered man, that wakes with more horrour, and terrour, and rage, than ever before: indeed properly the death only of the godly is a sleep. But to observe something first briefly in generall.

Obser. *A time of dying as well as living.*

We see here is a time of dying, as well as a time of living.

There is a time to serve God in living, and there is a time to yeeld our soules to him as well as a time to serve God in doing the actions, and functions of this life.

Vse. *Not to thinke much of long life.*

Which should teach us this, not to fix our thoughts too much on life. As there is a time for all things to the living: so there is a time to cease to live: and therfore to use the world with moderation, *as though wee used it not, knowing that the fashion of the world passeth away*. It should teach us to serve God as well in living as in dying.

And it should teach us to do all the good wee can while wee have time. *David* served God while hee lived, and hee served God in dying: because his death was in obedience: but (as I said before) after death, properly there is no service of God: but a receiving of wages, therefore let us serve God while we live, while we have time; because there is a time *when night will come*, the night of sicknesse, and of death, *and then no man can work*; if he would never so faine.

He fell asleep. Why did he not die before? hee served God a great while, hee did not die when he was first a good man. God

Obser. *Gods children must serve their time.*

God will have his Children serve out their Generation.

They must serve out their time: As soone as ever we beleeve, we have right to heaven: but God will have us beare the burthen of the day awhile, to bring others to heavn with us; to go before others in the example of a godly life; to gaine as many as we can.

1. *To gaine others.*

2. *To trie our graces.*

To trie the truth of our graces before wee come to heaven, whether they be true or no; that they may be true tried graces.

3. *To perfect us.*

And he will have us perfect before we come to so holy a place, hee will have us *grow in grac*, as *Ahasueros* his wifes were to bee perfumed, and prepared before they came to him. It is a holy place that wee hope for, a holy condition: therfore, he will have us by little, and little, be fitted by the spirit of God. Many such reasons there be, why God in heavenly wisdome will have us go on here a time before wee come to heaven: though as soone as we beleeve we are in the state of salvation, as Christ said to *Zacheus*, *This day is salvation come to thine house.*

Vse. *Not to repine that God will have us live.*

Therefore let us not repine that God will have us live. Indeed, as soone as a Christian hath faith, he hath life in patience, and death in desire, for hee is impatient to want his crowne: oh, but here is the time of service: and when he considers the eternity of the reward hee shall have after; he will bee glad to serve God, and he will be ashamed that he can

do

do it no more. When hee knowes hee ſhall have an eternall weight of glory for a little ſervice, then hee will deny his luſts, and pleaſures to ſerve God in the place hee lives in, whether hee be Magiſtrate, or Miniſter whatſoever; to undergo the burden of a little ſervice.

Againe, in that it is ſaid here, *Then he fell aſleep*, not before; till he had ſerved the counſell of God.

God hath alotted a man a time.

Obſer. *God hath alotted a man a time.*

He hath ſet him a glaſſe that muſt be runne, he hath given him a part to act, and hee cannot be taken away till that be done; hee can never fall aſleep till hee have ſerved the counſell of God. As it is ſaid in the Goſpell, concerning our Saviour Chriſt, *his houre was not yet come*. They have laid wait for him: but his houre was not come: ſo there may be many ſnares laid for the children of God by Sathan, and his inſtruments: but till their houre bee come, all the Divells in hell, nor all the Divells inſtruments on earth, cannot ſhorten a mans life one minute of an houre: for hee ſhall fall *aſleep* when he hath ſerved the counſell of God; when he hath done all that God will have him to do.

Vſe. *Ground of reſolution.*

Therefore it is ground of reſolution: let us go on in our places, and callings, undantedly, and wiſely too, not to tempt God, to ruſh into dangers: but (I meane) without baſe feare,

feare, and diſtruſt: for wee muſt ſerve God to day and to morrow, and then wee ſhall be ſanctified. Wee muſt ſerve God the appointed time that hee will have us to live here; and then wee ſhall fall *aſleep*, and not before: no creature hath power over the life of man to ſhorten his dayes.

The next thing wee will obſerve from the nature of *ſleep* is, that,

Obſer. *The death of the godly, refreſheth as ſleep.*

The death of the godly is a *ſleep*, in reſpect of refreſhing.

Sleep doth refreſh, and repaire, and as it were recreate, and make a man anew. *Sleep*, and reſt, it is the bleſſed ordinance of God, it is an excellent thing to repaire man: ſo after death, nature ſhall be repaired better; we ſhall riſe freſher, as it is, *Pſal.* 17. *ult. when I ariſe, I ſhall bee ſatisfied with thine image*, wee ſhall riſe refreſhed, better than wee lay downe. So that as we go to bed then, to *ſleep*, to cut off all cares: ſo when wee reſt in death, all cares, and feares, and terrours; all annoyances are cut off. *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord; they reſt from their labours*: inſinuating, that there is no reſt before: for to a man that knowes that this world is a work-houſe, and his life a ſervice to God, hee thinkes of no reſt till he be in his grave; ſo death it is a *ſleep*, in regard of that reſt. Wee reſt from the labour of ſinne, wee reſt from the wearieſome labour of the body, from the labour of afflictions, and oppreſſions, from the moleſtations

Pſal. 17. *ult.*

1. *Ceſſation from labour.*

of

of other men among whom we live, every way this life is tedious, and death rest.

Againe, it is in this respect a *sleep*: because a man goes to bed with assured hope of rising againe, and therefore he goes quietly: though it be a state of darknesse for the time, all the senses are bound up, yet hee knowes that in Gods ordinarie providence, hee shall rise againe: therefore men not only quietly, but cheerefully go to bed. So there is greater ground to know that wee shall rise againe out of our graves, than that we should rise out of our beds: for many mens beds have been their graves, in some sort, (I meane) they have died in their beds: but for the resurrection, we have the word of Almighty God, (that is a God of his word) that we shall rise againe: and we have it in the pledge of our Saviours resurrection, there is no doubt of that.

2. *Hope of rising.*

Therefore when wee die (if wee have faith) wee should make no more of death, than men doe to goe to bed: hoping undoubtedly of an assured, and joyfull resurrection. The want of faith in that kind, makes us backward to this: you see in what respect death is said to be a *sleep*. To speak only of those references, and relations that are most pertinent between *sleep* and death.

David fell asleep, and very willingly: for he had lived a painefull life: he served God, both as a private man, as a Sheepheard, & as a King, *Eccles.* 5. 12. *To a labouring man sleepe is sweet*, so

3. *After labour.*

Eccles. 5. 12.

ſo to a man that hath ſerved God carefully in his calling, and kept a good conſcience, death is very ſweete. Wee ſee children that have been playing all day, they are loath to goe to bed, but to a man that hath wrought all day, *ſleepe is ſweete*, as wiſe *Salomon* ſaith, *to a labouring man*. Would we then have death as a ſweet reſt to us? let us doe as *David* did, that is, bee painefull, and laborious in our particular place, and in our generall calling: let us be faithfull in them to keep a good conſcience, and ſet all in order as much as wee can while we live; to leave no ſeeds of debate when we are gone. Some men die careleſly this way in diſpoſing the good things that God hath given them; they lay a foundation of perpetuall jarring afterward: and ſo their death is skarſly a *ſleepe* and reſt: they cannot but bee diſquieted, when they thinke how they leave things, becauſe they were not wiſe before hand. *David* ſetled *Salomon* in his Throne, and ſet all things right before hee died, and that made him die, not only in reſt, but in honour, in 1 *Chron.* 29. 28. *David died in a good old age, full of riches and honour.*

Vſe.
To be painfull.

2.
Set all in order.

1 Chron. 29. 28

3.
Get faith in Chriſt.

P.al. 16.

And let us labour to get aſſurance of a change for the better: *David* his fleſh reſted in hope, becauſe hee beleeved in Chriſt, that Chriſts body ſhould ſee no corruption, *Pſal.* 16. So if wee would have death ſweete as a *ſleepe*, let us labour to get aſſurance by faith in Chriſt: and ſo our fleſh may reſt in hope, that

as Christ raised his owne flesh, so he will raise ours. Good *Simeon*, when he had seene Christ once, *Lord now let thy servant depart in peace, &c.* so after we have gotten a sight of Christ, to be our Christ, our Saviour, and Redeemer, and have interest in him; *Lord now let thy servant depart in peace.* So much for the tearme, *sleepe.*

It is added besides, that

He was gathered to his Fathers.

HE *was gathered to his Fathers* both in regard of his body, and in regard of his soule: for his body went to the house of the dead, the grave: and his soule went to his fathers, to heaven. As I said before of *sleepe*, so of this: it is a phrase of Scripture that must bee understood as the persons are. When a man dies, his body goes to the place, or house of all men, the house of darknesse, the grave: but for his soule that goes as the man is (to his fathers) to hell, if hee bee naught: to the soules of just and perfect men (as the Apostle speakes) if he have lived a gracious, and a good life; and so it must be understood here, because hee speaks of a blessed man.

Fathers, who meant.

He was put to his Fathers, he meanes not to his immediate fathers, but all beleeving men before him, that were the children of *Abraham*, his soule went to them, his body to the first Mother, the Earth, out of which it was taken.

taken. So the Generall is nothing but this, that

Obser. When we die, we are put to our fathers.

When we die wee are put to our fathers.

Therefore this should moderate our feare of death, and our griefe for the departure of others. Why? wee are not lost when we die; the soule and body is taken asunder, it is taken in pieces: but both remaine still; the bodie goes to the earth from whence it was taken, and the soule goes to God that gave it. And for our comfort, we goe to those that we knew before (many of them) to our fathers; not to strangers. Especially in respect of our soules, wee goe to our fathers; to our next fore-fathers, and to our old fathers; to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, to *Jacob*, to *David*, to blessed Saint *Paul*, and *Peter*, and all the blessed men that died in the faith. And when we are dead, wee goe to those that are more perfect than those that wee leave behind us. This should moderate our griefe: oh, I leave my friends behind me, my father and mother, and children! it is to goe to better, to greater; and those that love thee better. Thou goest to greater: for they are in their pitch, they have attained their end, they are in heaven: and to better, they are refined from those corruptions that men here are subject unto; and then their love is perfect likewise: therefore going to our fathers, and not to strangers, to those that are better, and greater, and love us more perfectly;

fectly; why ſhould wee thinke much to die? they will bee readie to entertaine us; oh the welcome that ſoules find in heaven! and at the day of the Reſurrection the ſweete imbracings, when all the bleſſed ſoules that have beene from *Adam* to the laſt man, ſhall meete together! ſeeing therefore wee goe to our fathers, it ſhould rather make us chearefull: Here, whom do we live with? take them at the beſt, our friends? men, ſubject to jealouſies and weakneſſes; our jealouſie makes us ſuſpect them, and their weakneſſes makes us thinke the meaner of them: ſo our love is not perfect, nor our graces are not perfect; therefore we cannot have perfect love, and contentment while we are here. But in heaven there ſhall be no jealouſie, nor feare, nor imperfection, which is the ground of jealouſie: we ſhall perfectly love them, becauſe they ſhall be perfectly good; and they ſhall perfectly love us, becauſe we ſhall be perfectly good; and one ſhall ſtand admiring the graces of God in another; and that will maintain a perpetuity of love: therefore it is want of faith that makes us unwilling to yeeld our ſoules unto God at the point of death. It is a going to our fathers.

But then wee muſt take heed what fathers wee imitate here, take heed who are our patterns while we live; for if wee do not imitate them here, wee cannot live with them in hea-

Take heed whom we imitate. Heb. 13. 7.

ven when wee are dead. Therefore it is a very neceſſary item in *Heb.* 13. 7. *Look to them that rule over you; that ſpeak the word, whoſe faith follow: Conſidering the end of their labour.* Let us look before what kind of men thoſe have beene, that wee deſire to live with in heaven: and mark the end of their converſation: for ſuch as we delight in, and frame our carriage to here, ſuch we ſhall live with hereafter. We muſt not think to live with *Nero*, and die with *Paul*; to live Epicures, and die Chriſtians; to live diſſembling, and falſly in our places, and to die comfortably, and to go to the bleſſed ſoules at the houre of death, and at the reſurrection. No, God will gather our ſoules with wicked men, if wee faſhion our carriage to wicked men: ſuch as wee delight in, and live with, and ſet as patterns before us, with ſuch we ſhall live for ever hereafter. *Hee was gathered to his fathers.*

To delight in the communion of Saints.

One ſigne of a man that ſhall be gathered to beleeving fathers, to his good fore-fathers (beſides imitation) is this, to delight in the congregations of juſt men here. A man may know he ſhall go to the congregation of perfect ſoules in heaven, if he delight in the congregations of Gods Saints here: for ſurely he that hath a confidence, to bee in the proper heaven, heaven that is ſo bleſſed; he will have a care while he lives, as much as he can, to be, and delight in the heaven upon earth. Now the

the chiefe heaven upon earth, is the Church of God; *Oh how amiable is thy dwelling place oh Lord!* where many ſoules meet together, to joyne in ſpeaking to God, and in hearing God ſpeak to them. Thoſe therefore that delight not in the congregations; that delight not in the ſervice of God; what hope have they to bee gathered to the congregation of the faithfull when they are gone? ſo much for that, *he was gathered to his fathers.*

And he ſaw Corruption.

IT is an Hebraiſme, for, *he felt Corruption, he had experience of Corruption.* All other ſenſes are attributed to ſight, that being the principall of all the ſenſes, they have their terme from it: becauſe ſight is the moſt excellent, the moſt capacious, and quick ſenſe, therefore (I ſay) the actions of all the other ſenſes are attributed to it; as wee ſay, ſee how he ſpeaks, and ſo here, *he ſaw Corruption*, that is, he had experience of it; becauſe ſight is a convincing ſenſe. He could not properly ſee when he was dead: but the meaning is, he had experience of *Corruption*; the truth is this, in a word, that,

Obſer. *The beſt, and greateſt ſubiect to corruption.*

The beſt, and greateſt men in the world, when they are gone, they are ſubject to *corruption.*

David was a King, and a Prophet: *a man af-*

ter Gods owne heart; yet this could not keepe *Davids* body from *Corruption*.

Reaſ. 1. *wee are dead men here.*

The reaſon is, wee are but dead men here: this is not the life that Chriſt hath purchaſed for us; wee are going to death: our naturall life is but *Curſus ad mortem*, a continuall going to death. We are alive now, but alaſſe our life is nothing, but a continuall dying: every day cuts off a part of our life. It is a ſtatute, that all muſt die.

2. *wee cannot bee crowned elſe.*

And it is our perfection to die, we cannot otherwiſe ſee God, & enjoy our Crown. Death indeed is nothing but miſery: but when we die, we go to live. The beſt muſt ſee *Corruption*.

Vſe. *To ſupport us againſt corruption*

Therefore this ſhould bee an argument to ſupport the ſoule, when we think of the rottenneſſe in the grave, and of that place, and time of horrour, when wee ſhall bee no more here upon earth. It is no otherwiſe with us than it hath beene with the beſt in the world, they all ſaw *Corruption* in their time.

2. *To take moſt care for the ſoule.*

Again, conſidering we have but corruptible bodies here, bodies that muſt ſee corruption: let us take care for the better part. He is a mad man, that having two houſes, one free-hold, the other a rotten tenement, ready to fall about his eares, that ſhall take delight in that, and neglect his owne inheritance, which is a goodly thing; it is for want of wit: and it is as much want of grace, when we having a double life, the life of grace, that ends in glory; the

life,

life of the ſoule, the life of God, as Saint *Paul* ſaith: and then the life of the body (which is communicated from the ſoule to the body) which is corruptible: our bodies are *but tabernacles of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt*: for us to take care of this vile body as the Apoſtle calls it, *Phil. 3. Who ſhall change our vile body; and make it like to his glorious body: according to his mighty power*: to take care of this vile body, and to neglect our precious ſoules. It is the care of moſt (ſuch is the carnall breeding of men: and they follow thoſe that bred them in this brutiſhneſſe, as if they had no ſoules, as if there were no life after this, their care is) *what they ſhall eat, and what they ſhall drink, and put on*; what to commend themſelves by in the outward man, to the view of others; all their care is for their outward man. Alas, what is it, but a corruptible, vile body? it is but the caſe of the ſoule; they forget the Iewell, and look all to the Casket, which is a baſe body, take it at the beſt while we are here. Philip 3.

3. *Not to be enſnared with the bodies of others.*

And take heed we be not enſnared with the bodies of others. This is the *corruption* of men, to gaze in this kind. You ſee wiſe *Salomon*, and others, were much troubled with temptations in this kind. Conſider, that body that thou doteſt on now, and which is made by the Divell a ſnare to thee: what will it bee ere-long? ſo noyſome, that thou wilt not in-

dure the presence of it; it is but a flower, and it is fading, fresh in the morning, and dead at night. All flesh is but grasse: it is a corruptible body. If thou wilt needs love, bee acquainted with such as have excellent spirits, that shall live eternally: Oh, there is an object of love indeed! that is the true love, and acquaintance that is spirituall. Many things may be lovely in the outward person: but see that there be a heavenly spirit; that is mounting up, that savours of good things, a spirit that hath life begunne in it: that shall be for ever happy in heaven: unlesse there bee this, there cannot bee a fit grouud for the love of any wise man.

To imitate David in life, and death.

To end all, you see here a short story of a good life, and a blessed death: let us make this blessed man of God exemplary to us in both. Let our whole life be nothing but a service of God: and let us consider the generation wherein wee are to take, and do all the good we can in our time. And then consider what death will be; when we come to die, it will bee a sweet sleep to us; and our resurrection will bee a refreshing, *our flesh shall rest in hope*, as *David* saith: *we shall be gathered to our fathers, wee shall see Corruption*, indeed: but mark what *David* saith, *Psal. 16. my flesh shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to see Corruption* Then this is the upshot of all: though we see *Corruption* when we are dead,

Psal. 16.

dead; yet with the ey of faith wee see a rising againe from *Corruption*. We see death but as a pot to refine us in: even as it is with silver when there is much corruption and heterogeniall matter mingled with it, the fire refines it; but it is not lost: so the grave refines the body, and fits it for a glorious resurrection. *The flesh rests in hope* all the while, though the body see *Corruption*: because our head saw no *Corruption*: if the head be above water, what if the body be downe? our head saw no *Corruption*, that is, Christ: for he rose out of the grave before his body putrified: for his body had a subsistence, and was gloriously united to the second person in Trinity: and being united to the Lord of life, it saw no *Corrrption*. For that did not lie upon Christ as our Saviour, to bee corrupt, but to die, *to bee made a curse for us*; and then especially, I say, by reason of the neare union of it to the God of life.

Well then, what is *Davids* argument of comfort? in *Psal.* 16. *My flesh shall rest in hope*; *because thou wilt not suffer thine holy one to see Corruption*. Because Christ rose from the grave himselfe; the holy one of God: our flesh may rest in hope, though we see *Corruption*: because the same divine power that raised Christ our head out of the grave, (that his body saw no *Corruption*) will raise our bodies to bee like our glorious bodie. Our blessed Psal. 16.

sed Saviour that overcame death in his owne person; by his power he will overcome death for all his mysticall body, that is, his Church: it shall be perfect in heaven, soule and body together, as hee himselfe is glorious now in heaven. That wee may say with *David*, notwithstanding our bodies see *Corruption* (as his did) yet our flesh shall rest in hope, because Gods holy one saw no *Corruption*.

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